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Helen Duval

A FRENCH ROMANCE



I.L. Young

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HELEN DUVAL

A FRENCH ROMANCE



BY

JAMES L. YOUNG
(COLORED)



SAN FRANCISCO

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[FOR THE AUTHOR]

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PREFACE

IN the summer of eighteen hundred and eighty-six, the author was stopping with a friend in Paris.

It was in the month of April and the city was wearing her loveliest colors. I had been there about three weeks and had become thoroughly interested in my surroundings.

There is so much to be seen in Paris ; her magnificent theaters, parks, gardens, handsome buildings, beautiful avenues and a multitude of interesting sights.

Anyone visiting the city need never be at a loss for somewhere to go or something to admire.

I was stopping with my friend, Narbonne Vincent in the Rue Tait-bot.

He is a Parisian to his heart's core ; insisted on taking me everywhere and showing me everything.

We had become acquainted in New York about a year previous. He was then thinking about visit-

ing France to see his father whom he had not seen for three years, and gave me an invitation to call on him should I ever visit Paris.

His father vied with him in making my visit as pleasant as possible.

Monsieur Vincent Pere was a widower, consequently we had no ladies to consult. We would remain up until almost morning telling stories and amusing ourselves in various ways. It was from Narbonne's father that I learned the story of Helen Duval and Louis Clarke.

He was a native of Lyons and it was there that he first knew the Duvals; meeting them again in Paris.

I was profoundly sorry to hear of his death six months later. He had been to Lyons on a visit and after a short illness died.

Narbonne told me he felt his loss sadly.

It was from him that I received such a clear and accurate description of the characters that has enabled me to write such a detailed account.

I have, of course, introduced new features and characters, but have not materially changed the story as it was originally given to me.

The names of the streets and places of that description I have taken from my memory of Paris, but won't take oath as to their complete accuracy.

I have endeavored to give to each character his or her proper place in the book, portraying their different dispositions.

And have especially devoted a little extra attention to Mademoiselle Duval and Monsieur Louis Clarke.

Helen being the heroine, and Louis in love with her, I thought it compulsory to do so but not to the extent of becoming detrimental to the other characters.

I shall say no more but leave the criticism that will necessarily follow to the indulgent and discriminating public.

Respectfully,

JAMES L. YOUNG.





HELEN DUVAL



CHAPTER I.

IN one of the narrow streets, in the north side of Paris and not far from Pere la Chaise, there lived in Eighteen Hundred and Seventy-four, a beautiful young girl by the name of Helen Duval. She was an orphan ; and lived alone, with no other companion but a very old woman, who kept her three little modest rooms clean and did all the work required in such a small household.

Helen was a dressmaker, and was seldom at home during the day. She worked with several other girls in a shop on the other side of Paris ; I think in the Rue Henri quartre. She was about nineteen years old ; and very beautiful. Had lovely blue eyes ; a mass of brown hair, that fell when unbound almost to her feet, a beautiful oval face ; small ears ; and small white hands. But her greatest charm was to be found in her eyes. — When she looked at you it was impossible to resist her charming gaze. And when at times she would lower them, — hidden for a moment by their long lashes — and then suddenly raise them, and look full at you, the

conquest was certain. You became, for the time, delirious with joy and happiness, and would for ever after do her bidding blindly, and without a murmur.

Helen had many lovers, but she treated them all alike. Showing a preference for none in particular.

But the one that loved her most was just the one that she would not speak to at all; except she was with one of her friends. Then she would, on meeting him, stop and say a few commonplace remarks on some unimportant subject; then would say she had much to do at home,—if going in that direction—or if going to work, would say that she must be at the shop at such an hour, bow to him, and hasten on her way, leaving him there, struggling with his love for her.

Louis Clarke, was of English birth, and had come to Paris with his parents, when very young,—was about twenty-nine years old, and very dark complexioned.

He was terribly proud and reserved by nature; and it was for that, I suppose, Helen did not like him. I think that she almost hated him; it is true she was afraid of him; and would not, under any circumstances, speak to him alone. And it was equally true that he loved the ground she walked on, but all to no purpose. She would give him no chance of making love to her, although she knew very well that she was the sole possessor of his heart.

Whether she ever thought of him in any way, no one could tell. All her friends would cry shame on her for treating him so cruelly, but she would continue to shun him all she could.

Helen was forewoman at Madame St. Claire's establishment for dressmaking, and had several

other young girls under her. Madame was very fond of her, because she was clever at her work, and kept all the other girls busy, and in good order. And the girls liked her also, every one of them; and would execute her slightest order with precision. One morning Madame St. Claire was sitting alone in her private room, when the bell rang, and when she opened the door was astonished to see standing there no other person than Louis Clarke, looking sad, with hat in hand; begging to allow him to see her, for a few moments alone. This could be easily done, as her private room stood apart from that portion of the house where the girls were at work.

She accordingly bade him enter, closing the door after placing a chair for him, and taking one herself, asked what had brought him from his work to see her at such an hour. Madame knew Louis very well, and knew all about his love for her handsome forewoman.

He began by apologizing for his untimely visit, and told her that it was about Helen Duval that he had come to speak, after receiving her promise of secrecy he began to relate to her his tale of ardent love for Helen.

He told her that he had tried to get some encouragement from Helen, a recognition of his love in ever so small a degree, but had failed in every attempt, and did not know what to do.

“But,” said Madame, “why not let her alone then, if she treats you so badly? If I were in your place I would seek another sweetheart.” He replied that it was impossible for him to do that, because his whole heart had been given to Helen the first time that he had ever seen her. That he would

wait patiently for her, if he could only find out whether she really did not hate him.

"Well, Monsieur, how can I help you? What can I do? She is not my daughter, and I have no right to interfere in such a matter. I can tell you one thing, though, and this much I am sure of—she has no other lover, and if you give her time to find out her own heart, she might come to love you in time. You are too anxious, and you inspire her with fear for you.

"This is natural, because she is so young, and you must remember also, that she has no parents, and wishes to be very careful in matters relative to matrimony. You should consider, then, all these things; and have patience. That is my advice to you. In the mean time I shall take the first opportunity to sound her about it, and will let you know what I think, when you come to see me again."

Louis thanked Madame very much, and arose to take his leave feeling much better for having seen her. It was then about 10 A. M., and as he passed by the room where he knew his enamorado was at work, his heart beat faster than the "click, click" of the many sewing machines, driven by the girls inside.

Louis was a printer, working in a large printing office in the Rue Scribe. He was an hour behind his time; but his employers knew him thoroughly, and liked him, and he was sure that nothing would come of this, the first time he had ever been late. He would simply explain the cause of his delay, and that would be sufficient.

Helen's most intimate friend was Cora Dubois. She lived in the Rue Dunkirk with her mother and

brother, and was always a welcome guest at her friend's home.

She knew more about Helen and her ways than anybody, except Madame St. Claire. She was a couple of years the senior of Helen, and rumor said that she was going to be married shortly to a young engineer working somewhere in the city. In the afternoon of the day of Louis' visit to Madame, she was to accompany Helen home.

It was a long way, but the girls agreed to walk the entire distance.

At five o'clock they left the shop, and proceeded to make their way toward the Boulevard Sebastopol, and through short cuts, in the Rue La Fayette; walking until they came to the canal at the top of the Rue La Fayette, then following the Bus Road until they came within sight of Pere la Chaise.

They chatted all the way; and it was not until half-past six, that Helen's home was reached.

When they had entered, and had taken off their cloaks and mantles, rested a little, and bathed their faces, Helen asked old Ninette to give them supper.

She had everything in readiness in a few moments, and the two young girls proceeded to partake of it. It consisted of mutton chops and salad, a small omelet souffle, nuts, figs, cheese, and a decanter of excellent claret.

Old Ninette stood close by, ready to hand anything to them; but they did not require her services in the least. They occupied a full hour in the enjoyment of this dainty repast; then they withdrew from the table, and went into the little parlor for a chat about things that could only interest themselves alone.



CHAPTER II.

MR. Samuel Clarke lived in the Faubourg St. Honore, with his wife and son, Louis Clarke. We are already acquainted with the younger man.

We will now introduce to our readers, his parents. Mr. Clarke was an Englishman by birth, but his wife was a Parisian, whom he had met in London, and married after a short courtship.

Although they were getting quite old, they were still in love with each other, and they loved their son Louis very dearly.

They knew of his love for Mademoiselle Duval, and also of her dislike for him.

The father was anxious that Louis should go to London, and marry a certain Miss Eastwood, a daughter of his bosom friend.

The two young persons had not met since childhood; yet old man Eastwood, and his friend Clarke, had often talked about it. But Madame Clarke was decidedly against it. She said that Louis should marry a French lady, and no other.

Louis himself was only too willing to obey his mother.

One evening he sat down by the side of his mother, and told her of his untiring love for Helen.

And she was determined to go and see this girl for whom her son was breaking his heart, but who seemed to care so little for him.

It was about a week after Louis' visit, that his mother took her way to Madame St. Claire and asked to see her.

When she had introduced herself, she asked Madame to allow her to see Mademoiselle Duval for a few moments.

Madame very suavely complied, and went to call Helen,— and as she left the room, laughingly said,— “ You must be very careful with your future daughter-in-law. For,” said she, “ she is very proud, and you must not say anything to wound her feelings in the slightest.”

The young lady entered the room where Madame Clarke sat waiting for her. As she entered Madame arose to receive her. Looking keenly at her all the time, she was forced to admit to herself, that her son had made a wise choice, as far as outward appearances would indicate.

Madame had been thinking how she had best broach the subject of her son's love; and had determined to try what the sudden mention of his name would do; and succeeded far beyond her utmost hopes.

At the sound of that name, spoken by his mother,— although she did not know it was his mother,— her face and neck became suffused with blushes, and she stammered as though she was about to choke.

And what had Madame said? She had simply inquired, quite suddenly, “ if it was true that she knew Louis Clarke? ” And saw at once what her son had been vainly trying to find out.

Madame was glad for his sake; but felt just a little anxious as to what the lady would do when she should recover her composure, which Helen

quickly did. Then Madame saw another phase of her son's sweetheart's character.

She threw her head up, and with burning cheeks, and flashing eyes, demanded to know to whom she was speaking.

Madame quietly answered, "I am his mother, and would be yours also, if you will let me."

And she arose and went to her, as she sat, pale, and looking frightened. "Yes," continued Madame, "your blushes at the sound of his name told me plainly that you loved my son; although you will not let him see or know it. Will you let me love you, for his sake? For if he loves you, I must also.

"I have found out lately that you hold his life's happiness in your hands. Will you make him miserable for life, or will you make him happy? He does not know of my visit to you, and I promise you to keep it a secret if you so desire it."

Helen here found her voice, and replied:

"Madame you have found out in a second, what I have striven to hide from your son for many, many months past. I have not permitted the slightest sign of love for him to escape me.

"I am a young and motherless girl, unused to the ways of the world. And when I first saw Monsieur Clarke, I felt strangely drawn toward him. Felt that I was losing something here in my heart. The sensation was new to me.

"I could not understand it. I had never felt that way before. Then it came to me that I was loving a man. I had heard of young girls falling through innocence, and their love for some one of the opposite sex. I made my mother a promise on her deathbed to commit no act for which I would have cause to be ashamed. And for this reason gave

Monsieur Louis no encouragement — no sign of my love for him.

"And I assure you madam, I love him dearly, but, entreat you not to acquaint him of it. In short he must not see me again at all.

"I forbid it for several reasons. In the first place I am too young to think of marriage. In the second place, I have nothing but what I earn as a dressmaker, and that just suffices to keep me, and Ninette."

"But," interrupted Madame Clarke, "you won't have to keep him. It will be just the other way. It will be his place to support you. And I give you my word he can do that easily enough. We are not rich ; but our son's wife need never want for anything. So promise me that the next time you see him, you will be kinder to him than you have been in the past."

Helen smiled, and said that she had never been unkind to him. But had simply refused to permit him, — to allow him — to make love to her, for the reasons she had stated.

Helen promised though, not to avoid him so persistently, now that she had seen his mother, and found her so lovable.

Madame St. Claire here entered, smiling ; and Madame Clarke arose to take her leave, apologizing for disturbing her, and keeping her forewoman from her duties.

She accordingly shook hands with Helen, — kissing her on the cheek, — and promising to pay her a visit at her own home.

Helen blushingly retired to her labours ; leaving the two older ladies alone in the room.



CHAPTER III.

AFTER Helen retired, Madame St. Claire asked Madame Clarke what she thought of her son's choice ?

To which Madame Clarke replied, that she was very much pleased, and would do her utmost to promote and encourage their early marriage. And after a few moments more conversation, took her leave, promising to call again.

We will now return to Louis whom we left, in Chapter One, on his way to work after he had seen Madame St. Claire.

He arrived, as we have said, a full hour behind his time, and met the proprietor at the door ; who smilingly said — “Ah ! you are late this morning, Louis.”

But Louis took him aside, and spoke a few words to him ; at which Monsieur Theobald smiled, and said it was all right, and bade him go to his work.

Louis thanked him, and passed into the office, where his fellow workmen were busy and had been for some time. All through that day he kept thinking of what Madame St. Claire had said to him.

She had told him that young girls became frightened when a lover pressed his suit too

vehemently, and had advised him to wait patiently, and to give her time to think. He did not know, as the reader does, that he was the man of her choice ; and had been so for months past. Poor fellow, how could he guess that ?

By her actions she had been cold to him, never speaking to him unless a third party was present. Always snubbed him ; and frowned down any attempt on his part to make love to her. Then how was he to know that she loved him ?

This state of things might have gone on for an indefinite time, had not the wit of his French mother made everything clear at one stroke.

But his mother, womanlike, was not going to let him win so easily — although she wanted to see her son happy.

Therefore, on his arriving at home that evening, she took him into the parlor before he had even had his supper ; and told him that he must not attempt to see Mademoiselle Duval that night, on her way home, as had been his custom lately.

He had been accustomed to wait for her at the corner of the Boulevard Magenta, and the Rue La Fayette — just only to get a glimpse of her, some recognition, no matter how slight. And upon that depended his night's rest. He dared not follow her to her home — She would not permit it. And he would return sad or pleased, as she had treated him smilingly or not.

And now this consolation was denied him, and by his own mother. What then was he to do ?

His mother, seeing the struggle that was raging in her son's breast, resolved to give him some comfort, and proceeded to relate to him about her visit ; carefully omitting to state anything of the discovery of Helen's love for him. But simply

telling him to have patience and he would win the lady of his choice. She would say nothing more, however; and with this he had to be satisfied.

He gave his mother his promise, and manfully kept his word.

He went for his usual evening walk, but in quite an opposite direction from that which Helen had to take on her way home.

And,—as his mother had foreseen,—by that simple circumstance gained more than he would have done, had he attempted to see her that night.

Helen, as usual, left her work on the evening of that day—She had resolved to be a little less cruel to Louis. But yet, did not know exactly how far to go.

She was alone this evening, and was debating with herself whether she should stop and speak to him, whether she should smile on him or simply bow, and pass on.

By the time she had got thus far in her thoughts, she had reached the corner where it had been his custom to expect her.

But, behold!—He was not there. Her heart gave a great bound.—Then it almost ceased to beat.—Was he, then, vexed with her? She had been very cold to him the previous evening,—she remembered that.

Had he taken offense, and resolved to see her no more?

Poor Helen! She was in trouble surely, did not know what to think, and proceeded to do a thing she had never done before—She threw a swift glance around, to see if he was there, and had passed him by mistake.

No, he was not there. She then felt that she loved him more than ever. But resolved never to pass that way to her home again.

She could not walk any more that evening,— She called a passing fiacre, and was driven to her home. Helen paid and dismissed the driver, having just sufficient strength to open the gate, pass through her little garden, and up to the door. Here her strength failed. And old Ninette arrived just in time to receive her, faint and dizzy.

She carried her into the house, and laid her on the parlor sofa, after taking off her outer clothing and unbuttoning her collar, she went to the mantel and took from thence a small phial of Sal Volatile, and unscrewing the silver stopper, placed it to her nostrils several times before she could be revived.

At last Helen opened her eyes, and shivered as though with cold — although the room was warm enough — She asked Ninette what was the matter. Ninette replied that she did not know. Suddenly it all came back to her, and she burst into a flood of tears.

They undoubtedly gave her great relief ; for after crying and sobbing for fully five minutes, she suddenly stopped and smiled, throwing her arms around old Ninette's neck, bidding her not to mind her—that she was not sick, nor anything of that sort — but just tired, asked her to make a cup of very strong coffee, which she would drink after bathing her face, and before eating her supper. Ninette went to perform her ablutions, giving her face a good rub, and heightening her color.

She made it a rule never to use powder or rouge, and consequently her face was as smooth as velvet, and her color quite natural.

About the time she had finished making her toilet, Ninette was ready with the coffee. Helen began to drink it leisurely, showing that she had completely recovered her spirits. When she had finished, she took her watering pot and gardening shears, and went into the garden, as was her custom every evening ; leaving Ninette to prepare the supper.

Old Ninette muttered to herself, she was sure it was an affair of the heart, and would like to see her young mistress happily married.

The old creature was very fond of her, and would do anything to give her pleasure. In the mean time Helen was busy among her flowers, and did not permit herself to think any more of Louis for the rest of the evening.

She remained half an hour in the garden ; then became tired ; and returned to the house with a rose in the bosom of her dress, looking bewitchingly lovely, with her eyes sparkling, and singing joyously.

It would not have been well for the tranquility and peace of Mr. Louis Clarke, to have seen her then. She ate her supper, doing justice to Ninette's culinary art. Then taking up a few nuts and a nut cracker, retired to her little parlor, where, after amusing herself for an hour, — singing and reading, — with a remark to Ninette occasionally — she became at last sleepy, and bidding Ninette to close the place for the night and follow her example when she had finished, — went to her room, and to bed.



CHAPTER IV.

ON that same night, Monsieur Clarke and his wife had a conversation about Louis — and she, in the strictest confidence, informed him of her visit in the morning and the results thereof. He said he was satisfied to let Louis marry her, if she was a good girl, and he loved her and she him, he would forego his long cherished plan, to see him wedded to his friend's daughter in London.

“Oh ! bother that girl ! A French wife is much the better of the two. And, besides, you have not yet seen her. I am going to invite her here and I want you to love her, for I consider her already as my daughter ; and she will be so in less than six months, now that I have taken the matter in hand.”

“I am satisfied,” replied her husband, “and speaking about a French wife, there never was a sweeter, truer, lovelier one than my own dear Mamie. And if this young lady is only half as good as you are, he will possess a treasure for which he can never be too grateful.”

Madame smiled at this burst of praise, which she was duly entitled to, merely kissing her husband and telling him to “shut up and go to bed,” which he proceeded to do ; she herself soon following.

Louis had not yet returned, but that was nothing unusual however ; his father and mother knew that he would soon be at home.

After closing up the front door, Bertram, muttering to himself that it was about time that Monsieur Louis should be married, in which case he ventured to express his decided opinion that his young master would find it more conducive to his peace and quietness to spend his evenings at home. Then, the man of all work, still muttering, retired.

In the meantime, where was Louis ? In accordance with the promise he had given his mother, he had refrained from going in the direction of the Boulevard Magenta. He walked about aimlessly for some time, then hailing a fiacre that was passing, he entered and was driven through the Champ Elysees to the Bois de Bologne, and sat down on one of the seats outside the gate.

He could not enter because it was too late. He, however, did not wish to do so. He only wanted to sit down and think.

He recalled the first time he had seen Mademoiselle Helen Duval, three years ago. How he had thought that she looked frightened at their first meeting. He remembered how he trembled and could not utter a word when his friend Jules Bertram had introduced them. That he had met her often on the street alone. But she would never stop and converse with him.

He had also met her with her friend Mademoiselle Cora Dubois ; and had noticed that she would stop *then*, merely to remark that it was a lovely morning and to give him her hand. Even on those occasions she would be cold and reserved to him.

He had noticed all these things in the first year after he had become acquainted with her and had tried to forget a girl who would treat him in that manner.

He had resolutely kept out of her way for a whole

week, only to find that he *must* see her again. He did see her at the end of that time ; looking lovelier, sweeter, and more cold than ever, and had never since tried to stem the flood of his love for her. Found it was an utter impossibility ; he had never seen her flirting with any one ; she was entirely different from all other girls of his acquaintance.

He had once timidly implored her to allow him to walk home with her but she had refused and looked offended and hurt, as he had thought, at the time ; and had never ventured to repeat the request, but had seen her almost every evening at the junction of Rue de La Fayette and Boulevard Magenta.

And now, after three years, he was no nearer to her than the day when he had been first introduced.

Again his reflections took a different turn. Why was it that he could love no one else since he had known her ? He would not have far to go to look for a sweetheart. He could count several who would be proud and happy to be his wife ; girls who had shown him by tender glances and in various ways that they would not say him "nay" if he would only notice them. But "no" he could not do that, because Helen had his heart in her keeping and there was no place in it for any other woman, — no matter whom she might be.

All these events passed through his mind, and he calmly weighed and studied them, only to find the results the same as before. He loved Helen. He would always love her, and would move heaven and earth to make her his darling wife.

He here began to retrace his steps ; going up the Rue Napoleon toward the Arch de Triumph, and down the Champs Elysees, making his way to the Boulevard Haussmann, and finally reaching his home, about two o'clock in the morning, completely

worn out and tired,—thinking that Helen was the sweetest girl in Paris, but the hardest one to win.

He finally went to bed, to dream of her,—not knowing that he was nearer the goal of his desire than he had ever been since she had become the mistress of his heart.





CHAPTER V.

WE have said that Madame Clarke had made a promise to her husband that she would have Helen for a daughter in six months' time, and she was determined to keep her word.

Being now certain that the two young people loved each other, it only remained for her to bring them together.

With that view she set to work in the most methodical manner possible.

She first called Louis to her on the morning she had decided to commence operations, and told him to go and stay a month with his friend, Jules Bertram.

Louis asked his mother the meaning of this sudden change, as she had always refused to allow him to room with Jules before.

But she told him to do as she commanded, and all would be well. Madame had first intended to call on Helen at her own home, but after considering the matter, she had concluded to invite Helen to spend some time with her instead.

It was true that she had never seen her but once, but then, under existing circumstances, felt justified in doing so. She therefore sat down and wrote a short note to Helen, asking her to come and stay with her for a month. The letter said that Helen need not be afraid of meeting Louis there; she

would not be annoyed by him in any way. That he was stopping with his friend, Jules Bertram, and his visits to the house would depend upon the pleasure and discretion of Mademoiselle herself. She ended by hoping to see Helen that very evening, and would find her ready to receive her.

Then the first thing she did was to take Louis' things out of his room, and prepare it for Helen's occupancy, leaving nothing in it that belonged to its former occupant but a picture of Louis himself, that stood over the mantel.

This picture was a good likeness of him when he was about eighteen years old.

She cunningly left this where it was, that it might be before her eyes all the time she was in the room.

When her preparations were all completed, she felt pleased, and went about the house smiling the rest of the day.

Helen was busy at her work about ten o'clock in the morning, when Madame entered the room with a letter addressed to her.

She received it wonderingly, not knowing who could have taken the trouble to write to her.

But Madame told her to read it,—that being the speediest way of finding out who had written it. Helen accordingly broke the seal and read, finding it an invitation from Madame Clarke to come and spend some time with her.

She went with Madame to her private room, and showed her the letter, which when she had read, unhesitatingly advised her to accept.

“But, Madame, do but consider what people will think of me? Everybody knows that Louis loves me, and if I go to live with his mother, it will set all Paris talking about us.”

Madame said :—“Helen you know that I love you just as much as though you were my own daughter. I could not love you more if you were, and therefore I am going to ask you a question, and beg you to answer me truly. Will you, will you, Helen ?”

“Yes,” replied she, “I will answer you truly.”

“That’s a good girl,” replied Madame. “Well, do you love Louis Clarke, or do you not ?”

Helen expected this, and was prepared with her answer. Without any stops or answers that appeared like coquetry, she replied :

“I do.”

“How long have you loved him ?”

“Ever since I have known him, about three years. I have always loved him, but I was determined that he should not know it, because I was afraid that he would take advantage of my love for him to harm me. You knew my mother before she died, and you will remember she was always careful of me during her lifetime ; and on her deathbed I willingly promised her to commit no act unworthy of myself or her teaching.

“Well I argued, knowing the world so little, unused to its traps and pitfalls, and all the other hidden ways that are employed to seduce young and unsuspecting girls: No one can blame me for being cautious and wary to the extent of giving myself pain. Yes, *pain*, Madame.” And she arose and began to walk the floor with a restless, slow step.

“Do you think that I have not suffered all this time ? To see the man for whom I would shed my heart’s best blood, day after day, and yet not to be able to speak lovingly to him, because I had no faith in him. I love him with my whole heart, and was afraid to break the charm ; for had he, on my giving him permission to make love to me, spoken *one*

word that I thought was unbecoming or unfit for a virtuous girl to hear, I would on the instant have dismissed him from me, and never seen him more. That is what I would have done, Madame ; but by being reserved toward him, I have retained his love and respect, while my love for him remains firm and untarnished, which it would never have done had I allowed him to make free with me. We would have been disenchanted before this. Now, his mother invites me to her home to spend some time with her, and you advise me to accept. I shall have to be doubly careful in my deportment at her house."

Madame St. Claire listened to her reasoning attentively, and when she had finished, told her she had no doubt but that Madame Clarke was a lady, and she would find her ready to be a mother to her, because she was anxious to see her married to her son Louis.

"Her object in inviting you to her house is simply to become better acquainted with you. Then you will be able to see more of Louis than you can possibly do at present ; and in my opinion," continued Madame, "the arrangement is a very good one for all parties."

"But," said Helen, "I shall have to come here as usual to attend to my duties."

"You may come later in the mornings, and go away earlier in evenings than has been your custom heretofore. Besides, you can instruct Cora more minutely, and that will relieve you a good deal."

"Very well," replied Helen. "If you are satisfied, I have no fault to find. I thank you very much for the trouble you are taking for me, and shall never cease to be grateful. And now I must go and see what the girls are doing. Some of them

will, no doubt, by this time require some other directions."

And she tripped lightly away, leaving Madame alone in her room, to read, sleep, or write—her three daily occupations.

We will describe Madame Claire for the benefit of our readers.

She was no ordinary person. She was a widow of about forty-five years—plump and handsome.

Before the great siege she had been happy in having a good husband and loving son. But they had taken part in that memorable event, and father and son had lost their lives in defense of their beloved Paris, leaving Madame a disconsolate widow.

Monsieur St. Claire had been a merchant in a small way, and his son had been an officer of custom at the port of Marselle, and just before the siege had returned home, only to be caught like a rat in a trap. Madame, since the death of her husband, had had many offers of marriage, but rejected them all—respecting the memory of her dear husband too much to install any one in his place.

Therefore she had turned everything that her husband had into money, and opened an establishment for dressmaking. She was doing well, employing as many as twenty young girls at times, and usually had work for them all. Her forewoman, Helen, she knew in better circumstances, when they were near neighbors in happy times.

Helen had lost her father during the great siege, and her mother had died soon after, leaving her two thousand francs, the wreck of their fortune.

And so we find Helen Duval and Octavia St. Claire quite friendly, notwithstanding the disparity of their ages.

Helen's predictions came true enough.

Mademoiselles Josephine, Agnes, and Pauline had been for the last half hour awaiting her return to the room.

Mademoiselle Cora, although next in importance to Helen, found herself incapable of showing the young ladies what they required.

And Helen smilingly directed each one, as she found it necessary, again taking her place at the principal table, where she was soon heard cutting and clipping, her sweet presence seeming to impart new life to the other girls the moment she had entered the room.





CHAPTER VI.

WE now return to Louis, whom we left with orders from his mother to take up his abode with his friend Jules Bertram.

Jules had often invited Louis to do so, and he had been willing enough, but his mother had previously objected to this arrangement. But here she was, suddenly and without warning, urging him to do the very thing she had all along objected to. However, Louis being a dutiful son, and loving his French mother very dearly, made no demur; but on his way home that evening from the Rue Scribe he turned into the Rue Poissonerre, and acquainted his friend Jules with his intention of at last accepting his kind offer, so often made him. Jules was a tobacconist, and a bachelor, living in his store alone. There was no one besides himself in the house after 6 P. M., and being alone, he sometimes found it very tiresome. Jules was overjoyed to have him, and said he had come in the very nick of time; and began to relate to him that he had met a young lady a couple of weeks before, at a ball given by a mutual friend, in the Park Moncieu. He said she danced with him twice, and at the expiration of that time he found himself hopelessly in love with her. He had begged permission to call at her home, in the Rue Bastile; and she had told him he was welcome to come and

see her, when he had the consent of her father. He had that very day succeeded in seeing her father, Monsieur de Artice, who had permitted him to call and spend the evening. He further told Louis that her name was Sabine, and that she was as modest as an angel, and every whit so beautiful as Helen. "Yes," said Louis, then, indeed, she is *so—mon ami*—and I congratulate you on the acquisition of such a treasure.

"But I beg to inform you, here and now," said he, laughing, "that there is no girl in Paris so beautiful,—I won't say as virtuous, because that would be casting a reflection on thousands of ladies in the city;—but I do maintain that Helen is the prettiest lady in Paris, and that reminds me that her name is not Helen either, but Hida, she does not know that I have found it out,—and let it remain a secret between us."

"All right" replied Jules, "but about this evening—you are not going home are you?"

"No," said Louis, "To-morrow my imperial mother will cause to be brought here such things as I may require while I remain away from home."

"That is good indeed. I shall leave here about six o'clock. One of my workmen, who understands the business, will be here and keep open till ten o'clock. He will then close up the shop and go home, taking the key with him, and we will call around there for it, on our way from the theatre, where we shall go after we have spent an hour with Mademoiselle De Artice."

"Very well," said Louis, "but supposing you give offense by taking me with you,—what then?"

"No danger of that. I shall simply introduce you as my friend. There can be no

harm in that. You will then be able to judge for yourself whether she is handsome or not."

"All right,—I am very sorry that I can not take you to see my sweetheart in return, because she will not let me come to her house, or in any way allow me access to her. I might just as well be in love with a statue, as Helen. See has aroused in me a love unquenchable,—undying,—but she herself, remains as cold and proud as it is possible to be."

He arose and threw away the cigar he had been smoking.

"I will no longer endure it. I shall go away and never see her again. Of course I shall never marry any one else. I don't think she will ever marry me, Jules."

"And yet," he continued, with a mournful cadence in his voice, I love her with every drop of my blood, with every pulse of my heart. My very soul is hers. I think no thought that she does not share. I dream no dream in which she is not the most prominent figure.

"All my aspirations and ambitions have Hida for their objective point. And yet, she will not love me. I crave nothing, nothing so much as I do her love. I am thirsty and hungry for that, and that alone,—and I can't get it."

He here stamped his feet with passion, and looking full at his friend, said slowly. "She is killing me by inches. Breaking my heart. She is pitiless, relentless, and yet I love her."

Jules, hoping to stop the tide of passion that shook his friend, said to him, "Louis, tell me one thing. Did she ever tell you to your face, with her own lips, that she did not love you?"

"No, Jules, no; she has never done that. And

for a good reason. I have never had the chance, she keeps me so far away from her, that it is next to an impossibility to woo her. This has been going on for three years,—ever since she was sixteen. And she is now entering nineteen, and as cruel as ever. She is affable and pleasant to her other male friends, only me,—she avoids in this way, myself alone,—that seems to inspire her with fear and hatred.

“Jules,” he added suddenly, “I shall spend this month with you, and after that will go far away from France, and try to forget Hida.

“I think that with a change of scene, and hard work, I ought to be able to do that. Father and Mother are not so old but that they can spare me for a year or two, long enough to learn to forget her.”

Jules here interrupted him by saying,—“you may be wholly wrong in your estimate of her. Maybe she has a heart as tender as a babe. I admit that she is proud—I ought to know,—I who have known her all my life.

“I introduced her to you,—you remember; and hold myself somewhat responsible for her behavior to you. But I never thought you would fall in love with her,—any way not to this extent.

“I am not permitted to visit her any more than yourself. She will on meeting me, stop and shake hands, inquire after my health,—and my young sister Ruby, say one or two other things, and bid me,—good-bye.

“I have not seen her now for four or five months.

“Did she ever make any sign, any response at all, to your constant steady love, Louis?”

“No, Jules; never,—never. I have tried to get her to look kindly on me, and she won’t even do that.

"Well, well, time cures all diseases, and it will heal mine also, I hope so. Let us get ready to go out. We have been sitting here talking for a full hour, and it is after six o'clock already. We will have to hurry, if you still mean to get to the house of your beloved by that hour" — and Louis laughed.

"We have sufficient time," replied Jules, laughing also. "If we arrive there by seven, we shall still be in good time. But we will begin all the same, Jaques Gouland will be here soon to take charge for the rest of the night; so we will make ourselves as comfortable as possible.





CHAPTER VII.

HELEN having decided to accept the invitation of Madame Clarke, sat down just before she left the shop to write a note in reply. Thanking Madame for being so good as to remember her, but saying that she could not come that night, as she must go home first and tell Ninette ; promising, however, to come the next evening ; that she would send Ninette around in the morning with some things ; and then she would be happy to place herself under Madame's care and guidance for as long a time as she would like to have her stay. She only hoped that Madame would keep her word about Monsieur Louis, and not permit him to tease her ; and had no doubt but that she would be perfectly happy at Madame's.

She sent this note by a messenger just as she was about to start for her home. She did not take her old route through the Boulevard Magenta and Rue La Fayette ; but took a different way altogether, and arrived home quite safely without any mishaps.

On arriving, her first act was to call old Ninette, and to acquaint her with the whole affair from beginning to end—not forgetting to tell her about what Madame Clarke had found out on her visit to the shop. She asked the old woman's pardon for having kept such an important matter from her

knowledge, and promised never to keep any more secrets from her.

All these things Monsieur le Abbe St. Armand knew long ago. Helen was a good Catholic, and Monsieur le Abbe knew her little faults, and everything about her very well. The events that had happened on this day would be known to him before she was much older, and he would advise her rightly and tell her what to do. He had promised her mother to do this ; and he had kept his word well.

Yes ; she would tell him that she was going to spend a month with the mother of the man she loved, and would receive his blessing and his prayers. She was sure of both ; for had she not always been good ? She had never committed any great sin, and would be very careful not to do so. Helen talked all these things over with her old friend, and found strength enough to do as she had proposed.

Accordingly, she told Ninette to pack up a few things for her, and take them the next day to Madame Clarke's in the Faubourg St. Honore, and to return to the house, and continue to stay and look out for everything as usual until she should return. Then she ate her supper, and went into the garden to water her flowers for the evening—quite contented and happy with herself and all the world.

Monsieur Clarke was one of those deep, stolid Englishmen who, once getting an idea in his head, nothing could remove it. He had agreed with his equally stolid friend, Mr. Eastwood, of London, years ago, that their children should marry.

At that time Louis was about ten years old, and Miss Princess Eastwood just entering her third

year. The young folks had never met—strange as it may appear—since Monsieur Clarke had come to Paris some eighteen years before. But the parents had often corresponded, and had kept their compact so far sincerely. Madame Clarke herself never liked the plan, any more than did Princess' mother. But they remained passive, and did nothing to mar the arrangement.

Miss Princess was really good looking, after the English type; but as unlike Helen Duval as two extremes.

Helen was slim and of medium height, with glorious blue eyes, and charming complexion, but proud at the same time. She never inflicted this last attribute, however, on her friends, male or female. Yet there was one person who felt the full effects of her pride; and that person was Monsieur Louis Clarke.

To him she had been pitiless. She had of late, especially, treated him shamefully. But he bore it all with the meekness and composure of a stoic.

Did she mean to love him at last? To shower on him her heart's great treasure for all the pain she had caused him?

We will wait and see.

Mr. Clarke had told his wife that he was satisfied to have Louis and Helen marry—never having seen the lady. His wife believed him, because she had never a cause to doubt him before. Had she been a little more observant she would have noticed that he had been too eager to consent to her plans. But the fact is, he had been deceiving her all along. He never really intended to relinquish his cherished idea for a moment. He only wanted to gain time.

With that view, he had thrown her off her guard, intending to write to his old friend in London to make all speed, and come to Paris, bringing his wife and daughter with him, and on some fine morning appear at his house and explode the plan his smart Parisian wife had laid. He was not therefore ready for such active preparations on her part. Accordingly he viewed with dismay the promptness and rapidity with which she was about to conclude the whole matter—aided and abetted by his son and heir. He there and then on that very evening, sat down and wrote to old man Eastwood to repair to Paris at once, and to bring Princess with him. There was no time to be lost, he wrote.

My wife has taken the matter in hand, and we must act at once. If you wish to see our old scheme carried out, hasten here as fast as steam will bring you.

This letter was posted, unseen by his wife, and just about the time that Helen was writing her acceptance of his wife's invitation.

On the following morning Helen arose very early for she intended to stop on her way to see Monsieur St. Armand, her confessor. She drank her coffee, put on her hat and cloak, and left the house; stopped on the way as she had determined to do, and told him everything that had happened the day before, and asked for his advice. He told her that she would have to be very cautious in her conduct while there. To be exemplary in her behavior. To be very distant to Louis should he ever come to see her, and above all to watch her heart every moment of the day, and never to let him find out that she loved him.

“If he finds that out,” said Monsieur le Abbe,

"trouble will ensue. There will come a time when you must let him know of your love for him but that time has not yet arisen. Therefore," concluded the good Abbe, "*watch, watch.*"

He gave her his blessing, and she arose and went to her work at Madame St. Clair's.

Jules Bertram and Louis Clarke, went to Madame de Artices' as had been arranged, and Louis was introduced to the fair Sabine.

As Jules had said, she was handsome, but not to compare with Helen, and of quite a different style of beauty. Our readers are already acquainted with Mademoiselle Duval's beauty.

Mademoiselle Sabine was fair, *very fair*, with pale, straw-colored hair, light blue eyes, and small mouth. Short, and inclined to stoutness.

Louis, looking closely at her and comparing her with Helen, felt vexed with Jules for daring to say that she was as lovely as his incomparable Helen.

He, however, smothered his feelings for the present, intending to score Jules unmercifully when they got home.

He entered into conversation with her parents, while his friend was completely taken up with his sweetheart.

Monsieur de Artice was saying: "Yes, I am very sorry for him. But you see he brought the matter on himself, the fault is his own; just fancy having a hundred thousand francs in his house all the time, and so many good banks in Paris!"

"Yes," said Madame de Artice, "Clotilde, his wife, is almost crazy. We have been friends for a long time. His daughter, Mercedes, is a sweet girl, and for their sakes he should have been more careful."

Louis here spoke: "I did not know him intimately, but have often seen him at our office in the

Rue Scribe. He appeared to be a very careful business man, and I would not have thought that he was so neglectful."

"I knew that he had a large sum of money in the house, but thought he had the principal part of his wealth in one of our banks here in the city," said Monsieur de Artice.

"Do you think he will recover any part of it?" asked Madame de Artice.

"I sincerely hope so. I am going to call and see him on my way down town, and give him what help I can, although he has not asked me. Yet all his friends should stand by him in his greatest need. Jean Rolan shall not go unaided, for he has helped many a poor man, to my certain knowledge," said Monsieur de Artice.

"And," said Madame, "I shall invite Clotilde and Mercedes here for a few days, until they can see what is best to be done. Poor dears, how I pity them."

The writer will here explain to his readers that two days before there had been a fire in the lower part of the Rue Bastile, which had done much harm to various houses, the principal sufferer being a Monsieur Jean Rolan, a merchant of some standing. The same Jean Rolan had a very great antipathy to all banks in general, and to Parisian ones in particular.

At the time of the fire he had a large sum of money in the house, which had been stolen during the melee. Several persons had testified to having seen a man enter the private room of Monsieur Rolan, and come out again with something in his hand, but he had immediately disappeared, and was not again seen by any of them.

On the night of the fire, Monsieur Rolan had

retired as usual, leaving his desk locked with, as he said, one hundred thousand francs in notes, bonds, and gold, all amounting to that sum. He was awakened by the noise in the house and on the street. He quickly got out of bed, and flew to the bedroom of his wife and daughter arousing them also. He heard the alarm of fire everywhere. His wife and daughter had hurriedly dressed themselves, and escaped down the stairs, snatching whatever valuable jewelry they could find in so short a time, and reached the street in safety. He had made a rush to his private room to secure his property, but was by this time prevented by the smoke and fire that had enveloped that particular part of the house.

He made several attempts, but to no purpose, and had to get away as quickly as possible and run down the stairs, half blinded by the smoke, and scarcely able to breathe.

He finally reached the street, and joined his wife and daughter more dead than alive.

The daily papers had given a full account of the whole affair. The police had taken the matter up, but had as yet found no clue to the solution of it. Everybody who knew anything about the matter, thought the money had been stolen during the early part of the fire, before the master of the house had been aroused, and that the thief had got completely away with his stolen gains.

Rewards were offered for the arrest and conviction of any one connected with the fire and theft, and here the matter had ended.

Meanwhile we will return to Jules and Sabine, whom we left talking together, oblivious to the conversation carried on by her father and mother and Louis.

Jules was saying: "Ah, Mademoiselle, I am very happy in being permitted to call and see you. I hope you have not forgotten what a delightful evening we spent at the ball. I hope that you had your full share of pleasure, Mademoiselle?"

"Oui, Monsieur, I enjoyed it very much. I had not been accustomed to go to balls, and when I received an invitation through my father, I can assure you that I was very happy, and persuaded mother to take me."

"It was the happiest moment of my life when I saw you for the first time that night. I was oblivious to all the other ladies in the room, and could not rest until I had obtained an introduction, for which I thank Heaven and Madame Grimand."

"Have you long known her? She is a delightful woman, is she not?"

"Oh, yes," he replied, "I have known her for some time. Her husband, and myself, and Monsieur Louis often meet about business matters. They have not been long married, about eighteen months, I think. She was a dressmaker at Madame St. Claire's in the Rue Henri quatre, where Louis' sweetheart is forewoman."

"What?" said Sabine, "is your friend engaged?"

"No, not regularly engaged, but he loves her very much; and although she treats him shamefully, he hopes to win some day. I introduced them three years ago, and he fell in love with her immediately, and has loved her ever since. He has eyes for no other lady: swears by her, and worships the ground she treads; and yet she will not change towards him."

"Monsieur Jules, I am interested in your friend's sweetheart; describe her to me, will you?"

"I can hardly do that, you know, but I'll try.

She is almost as lovely as a certain young lady not far from me at this moment"—here Sabine blushed but made no reply. "In the first place, she has large, beautiful, dark blue eyes, long brown hair, small feet and a pretty mouth. She is even tempered and loves everybody, and everybody loves her. When she is engaged to Louis, he will bring her to see you, and then you will be able to judge for yourself. Are you satisfied?" questioned he.

"Yes," she replied, "but I wish to see her before that time. You say that she is the forewoman at Madame St. Claire's in the Rue Henri quatre?"

"Yes, that is where she works, and you can see her there at any time between nine and five in the day. She is an orphan and lives alone near Pere la Chaise in a nice little cottage with a beautiful garden, which she keeps in order herself."

Sabine smiled sweetly, then looked at her mother. Jules had been there considerably over an hour, and arose to take his leave, conducting Sabine close to her mother's chair; he stood while making a few remarks, expressing his thanks for being allowed to call. Madame renewed the invitation to both young men, sanctioned by an eloquent glance from Sabine, and a "certainly, certainly, come when you please," from Monsieur de Artice.

Jules shook hands with them all, merely touching the hand of Mademoiselle Sabine. Followed by Louis, he went to the door. They bowed themselves out, followed by Monsieur Artice, who bade them good-night, and returned to the room.

Louis and his friend went to the theatre O'deon to pass away the rest of the evening.



CHAPTER VIII.

MONSIEUR St. Armand, Helen's confessor, had told her that she could go and spend a month with Madame Clarke, but had advised her to be very careful, and commit no act unworthy a young lady. He had also told her not to let Monsieur Louis perceive her love for him, under any circumstances. For if she did so it might cause her unhappiness and sorrow. He had given her his blessing and she had departed.

She went to her work in the Rue Henri Quatre quite happy and contented. All through the day she performed her duties pleasantly and carefully ; and at four o'clock in the afternoon she took her departure from Madame Clarke's — for the first time in all her life to stay among strangers.

Helen had only seen Madame Clarke once, and yet felt drawn toward her — had confessed that she loved her son Louis ; but he knew nothing at all about her love for him, but *she* knew very well he loved her, and wanted to marry her. She knew that should she give him the least chance, he would fall at her feet, and with manly eloquence tell her that he had loved her for a long time. She also knew that should he do this, she would not be able to resist his pleading. And this she was not yet prepared to allow. She wanted to be sure of the love of his father and mother also. And being sure of their love for her, would then gradually

unbend toward their son ; Helen never lost sight of the fact that she was alone, and could not be too careful. Therefore on her arrival at Monsieur's house, she set about making herself agreeable to the old folks.

Helen knew nothing of the arrangement made by the old gentleman years ago concerning his son Louis and Miss Eastwood. Had she known that, nothing in the world could have made her go there.

Madame took her upstairs and showed her the room she was to occupy — which the reader knows had been Louis' — and the first thing she saw was, his likeness over the mantel. She blushed charmingly, looking at Madame the while.

Monsieur Clarke was not at home at the time of her arrival, but he came in shortly after, and Helen was introduced to him. He looked at her long and carefully, and was forced to admit that she was very beautiful, and would make a splendid wife for Louis. But he still intended to have Louis married to Princess.

He said : —

“ Mademoiselle, you were born in Paris, were you not ? ”

“ Yes, Monsieur, replied she. “ Born here and brought up here.”

After a pause — “ I am an orphan, and support myself as a dressmaker.”

“ Do you find it hard work ? ”

“ Sometimes,” she said. “ When we are very busy, then I have to work pretty hard. But, you see, I am young and strong, and do not mind it. Madame has been kind enough to invite me here for a short time, and that will lessen my labors a great deal, as I need not go to work so early, and leave two hours sooner.”

"You will permit an old man to compliment you upon your exceeding beauty."

"Oh, Monsieur," she said, "I am glad for one person's sake that I am so, not for myself at all."

"And may an old man know who that person is? Your sweetheart, eh?"

She did not reply to this pointed question; but held her head down. Her beautiful eyes were veiled by their long lashes.

"He will be a happy man, Mademoiselle, who wins your love."

"I hope to be able to love my husband as much as he loves me, Monsieur,—when I do marry. I shall not marry otherwise. It would not be right, I think," said Helen.

"No," he answered. "It would not be right. When we were married—I and Mamie, there—we loved each other dearly, and we do still, don't we?" he queried, looking at his wife.

"Certainly," answered Madame, "we love each other yet. And I should be very sorry if it were not so. But," she added, "you have questioned her enough for one evening, and I suppose she must be tired. I am going to get supper ready at once."

Monsieur smiled pleasantly, and left the room.





CHAPTER IX.

MR. John Eastwood lived in a pleasant house in Mayfair, London. One morning as he sat at breakfast with his family, the servant brought a letter to him, with the Paris Post mark. Mr. Eastwood had many friends in Paris, but he knew at once who had written this letter, so he was in no hurry to break the seal. He would wait until his daughter had left the table — this she was not long in doing, and, in a few minutes could be heard strains of a lively waltz. As soon as she had retired from the room, he took up the letter and read it, at first slowly then quickly. Having finished, he gave a long whistle, and passed it to his wife, who sat opposite. She also read it, then looked up at her husband.

“So,” he said, “Mamie wants to marry Louis to a French woman. This must not be. He belongs to Princess, and she to him. He states that we must not delay in the matter, as the young lady is remarkably beautiful. He says he has not yet seen her, but his wife has, and has invited her to come and spend a month with them. It will be a drawn battle if his French wife opposes it. And now I remember she never did take kindly to our scheme, from the first — We must go to Paris at once.”

"I do not know, I am sure you have rejected all offers for Princess' hand, from reputable young men, and now you are ready to throw her at the head of a man who loves another girl. That is not fair or just toward our child. They have not even seen each other since they were babies, and can't possibly be expected to love at first sight now."

"Oh! nonsense Florence —" replied he, get ready as soon as possible. We will go to Paris next week. In the mean time, I am going to answer this letter right away. By this time I suppose she is installed under the same roof with him, and it will be a hard matter to part them."

Cora Dubois, lived in the Rue Dunkirk and was Helen's friend — going home with her often and sometimes sleeping there, when it was too late to return to her own home. She had been spoken of as engaged to a young engineer in the city — Her brother, Henri Dubois, had been a sailor, on one of the steamers running from New York to Havre — but for the last two years had remained on shore, as his mother had a great repugnance to his going to sea. He had obtained employment in the Chemins du fer du Nord, as a porter; and was doing very well hoping to soon get a position as freight clerk, which had been promised him for his good conduct. The young man to whom his sister was engaged, and himself, were often seen together evenings, on the Boulevard Magenta, which is not far from the Rue Dunkirk.

They would sit in front of a cafe, sipping

their absinthe, and taking their coffee with great gusto, until six or seven o'clock.

Then the two would go home, and take Cora to the theatre, or some other place of amusement.

Madame Dubois loved Victor St. Mar, almost as much as she did her son Henri, and had given her free consent for him to marry Cora, as soon as she was ready.

Cora had put the wedding off for six months. Victor had implored her to lessen the time, but she would not. And he was forced to be content and await her pleasure in the matter. She would laughingly say, that as she would have to obey him after marriage, she would compel him to obey her now. And if the truth must be told Cora could be a hard task-mistress, when she chanced to be angry, which was often the case the nearer the time approached for their wedding. She would get in a passion, without any apparent cause, and would refuse to let him or any one else comfort her. Then, as suddenly, would smile and kiss him, and all would be sweet and calm as a summer sky.





CHAPTER X.

LOUIS Clarke, and his friend Jules Bertram, went to the Odeon. They did not go there for any other object than to pass away the evening. This they continued to do tolerably well, until about ten o'clock. They then got tired and left the theatre. They sauntered aimlessly along the Avenue de la Opera, seeing all the sights of the evening, until they found themselves in the Boulevard des Italiens ; they entered one of the brilliantly lighted cafes and sat down.

A smooth-shaven garcon approached and took their orders — While waiting they took a good look around the room. There were several persons present, all well dressed, most of them in the inseparable evening dress. There were several ladies with their escorts, — a few footmen, standing idly by, waiting for their masters or mistresses, as the case might be. Several Englishmen, dressed in Scotch tweed suits, smoking silver mounted pipes, and standing or sitting as their fancy directed, talking in groups of two or three.

But there was one young fellow, who appeared to be by himself, sitting silently by a small table not far from that at which our two friends were seated, and who in his own quiet way was listening to all that was going on around him. He

appeared to be about thirty years old, had dark brown hair, and a moustache of the same color; light blue eyes, and a firm oval face. He appeared to be a determined sort of a person,— and would undoubtedly prove an ugly customer to any one who molested him.

Louis made up his mind to watch him more closely — He was more observant than his friend Jules, and knew more about the world.

The waiter had by this time returned with their orders, and placed the dishes on the table. When he had done, he retired silently to one side, — awaiting their further pleasure.

The two young men began their repast in a leisurely manner, with attentive glances, and listening ears. All at once the young solitary Englishman arose from his seat with a bound, just as another man entered the cafe, from one of the side doors nearest him. The individual who appeared to cause the ire of the young Englishman came in and took his seat at the third table from that of our friends, — it had just been vacated by a lady and gentleman, and a waiter was about to clear away the débris, when this person sat down. And speaking in English, which the waiter understood very well, he said, “ When you have cleared the table, fetch me a bottle of soda, and a glass of Eau de Vie.”

“ Very well sir,” replied the waiter, and continued with his task of removing the dirty glasses, cups and saucers, and other matter with which the table was covered.

We shall describe the man. As he came through the room Louis had observed that he was very tall and broad shouldered. He stood about six feet and one inch, with powerful limbs. He was

a fine looking man ; clad in full evening dress, and appeared as if he had just come from a ball or concert, or some place of amusement. He wore a fine diamond ring on his finger, and a very fine watch chain could be seen hanging across his waist coat. In short he appeared to be a thorough gentleman, and when we say that he was about thirty-five years, we will have given a just description of him.

Our young Englishman walked up to him as he sat waiting for his brandy and soda, and spoke as follows :

“ My Lord, you see I have kept trist with you, and I shall be happy to hear your Lordship’s explanation regarding your conduct in the early part of the evening.”

“ Mr. Glenham, will you take a seat ; then we shall discuss the matter like gentlemen.”

“ I have no objection to sitting,” replied he in the tweed suit, “ but I am rather anxious to hear your explanation.”

“ I shall hasten to oblige you as soon as possible,” replied his Lordship.

“ You will doubtless remember,” said the person addressed as Lordship, “ you will doubtless remember that I told you *distinctly* at our last interview, that I considered the lady of age, and that if she was willing to go with me, I would pay no attention at all to any threats or inuendoes emanating from you ; and I went further, if my memory deceives me not. I told you also that I should consider any interference on your part as extremely insulting, and not to be borne.”

During this insulting speech, delivered with the utmost coolness and *sang froid*, Mr. Glenham’s anger had been rising gradually, and by the time his Lord-

ship had finished, his wrath knew no bounds, and arising from his chair, which he threw to one side, he spoke in a slow, deep voice :

“ Your Lordship will be pleased to remember that when you speak in that insulting tone to Richard Glenham, you are placing yourself in considerable peril. But let that pass for the present. I have not yet received the candid explanation that is due from one gentleman to another. I shall be guided by that, according to whether it be satisfactory or not.”

“ You are dictatorial in your language to me, Mr. Glenham,” said the Lord at this point.

“ I am perfectly justified in being so,” said Mr. Glenham, hotly.

“ If you wish to receive an explanation from me, after your abrupt and ungentlemanly remarks, you will apologize to me, sir,” said his Lordship, angrily.

“ I will do no such thing,” said Mr. Glenham, “ and Lord Upham, allow me to say that you are a liar, and unfit to be in the company of gentlemen.”

Lord Upham heard this insult, and looking around the room saw all eyes fixed upon him. He forgot himself and struck Mr. Glenham.

Mr. Glenham quickly returned the blow, and there immediately followed an exciting scene. Mr. Glenham was the stronger of the two, although the smaller. A well directed blow delivered square in his Lordship’s face, completely overturned that gentleman, and he went crashing to the floor.





CHAPTER XI.

LOUIS and his friend had watched this exciting scene, as did all the other occupants of the room, with a deep interest, and when Mr. Glenham had called Lord Upham a liar, Louis, Jules and several others were close enough to the quarrelsome gentlemen to observe the deep passion in the face of his Lordship; and anticipating just what would occur, as Lord Upham fell to the floor from the force of the blow. Louis immediately took hold of Mr. Glenham, as he stood over his fallen adversary, with a frown on his handsome face and with clenched fists and whispered a few words in his ear, to which he answered:

“I am extremely obliged, and will take your advice.”

Louis told his friend to pay for what they had partaken, when he had finished. But that he was going to see the gentleman (who appeared to be a stranger in Paris) to his hotel in safety.

Mr. Glenham, bowing haughtily to the group of persons that stood around him, left the room accompanied by Louis. After walking a short distance up the boulevard, Mr. Glenham suddenly spoke to Louis, and said:

“I have not the honor of your acquaintance, sir, but you have acted in quite a friendly manner toward me, and deserve my confidence to a certain

extent. The trouble that exists between Lord Upham and myself, has been brewing for some time. Lord Upham lives in the same vicinity as myself, in England, and has led astray a young governess, in whom I take a deep interest,—I am persuaded that there has been no harm done as yet,—but am sure that he is endeavoring to have her join him here in Paris. If he should succeed in this, and it becomes known, her reputation will be forever destroyed, and that would cause myself and others deep sorrow, and much regret.”

Louis gave Mr. Glenham his name, and thanked him for his confidence, and in return told him, that he was himself of English birth, although brought up in Paris. Told him he was an artistic printer, living in the Faubourg St. Honore; but at present stopping with his friend in Rue Poissonerre. That he and his friend were on their way home, when they had stopped to take a late supper, and had fortunately seen the little disturbance that had arisen between himself and Lord Upham and would be happy if he could be of any use to him.

Mr. Glenham replied that he was stopping at the Hotel Meurice, with his wife and son. Had been in Paris about a week. He had accidentally met Lord Upham, and having some suspicion in regard to the matter he had referred to, had accosted his Lordship in the street, a couple of hours before, and as his Lordship was then with some of his particular friends, he had made an appointment at the cafe, which they had just left. He also said that his wife did not know that he was in such a place; and if she ever found it out, would be very angry with

him. He concluded by handing Louis one of his cards,

“MR. RICHARD GLENHAM,
Low Moor,
YORKSHIRE.”

and invited him to call on them the next evening, and to bring his friend with him. Again thanking him for his gentlemanly conduct, and saying that he was not ignorant of his way home, he shook hands with Louis, and walked away, leaving him standing there, wondering whether to return to the cafe, or go to his friend's. He finally decided to go home to his friend's in the Rue Poissonerre.

Lord Upham had picked himself up, and stood staring around. He was not hurt in any way, but was in a furious passion for a moment or so. He received the sympathy of the lookers-on, but ventured no remark,—only brushing his clothes and putting on his hat.

When he had done so he called the waiter, and settling for what he had, quietly left the cafe. At the door he hailed a cab, that stood on the opposite side of the street, and was driven rapidly away.

After Mr. Glenham and Louis had left the cafe, there was a rush to see if Lord Upham had sustained any harm. But he appeared to be only stunned. He had left the cafe in a cab, as we have already stated.

Jules paid his reckoning, and also left the cafe ; calculating rightly, that Louis would go to his house which proved to be the case, for the two friends arrived almost at the same time. Jules had not far to go to get his key — only a few doors away.

He quickly returned and opened the door. The two young men entered the house — Jules closing the door after them. It was about two o'clock in the morning that they decided to go to bed, — Jules showing Louis to a room next the one he was occupying.

Louis told Jules all Mr. Glenham had told him ; and also about the invitation for both of them on the evening following.

Jules replied, " Louis, my friend did you ever see such a blow in all your life ? *sacré bleu !* Lord Upham fell like an ox. I thought he was killed, but he was only stunned, and when he got up, paid his bill, and not saying a word to anybody, left the cafe as unconcerned as though he had not received a blow like the kick of a mule," and Jules laughed.

He said all this while undressing, and by the time he had finished his remarks, was ready to get in bed. He came and inquired if his friend was comfortable.

Louis replied that he was perfectly so.

" I will bet you a five-franc piece, that we shall hear more of this. Lord Upham is not the man to take such a blow tamely, Jules," — said Louis. " But no matter, I will see Mr. Glenham through if any thing more comes of it here in Paris."

The two friends were in bed by this time, and bidding each other " good-night," were soon asleep. Louis to dream of Helen Duval, and his friend of Sabine de Artice.





CHAPTER XII.

MR. Eastwood had told his wife to be ready to leave for Paris the following week — it was on Saturday that he received the letter from his friend.

He left his wife in the breakfast room alone ; and went in search of his daughter. — He found her in the parlor, she had finished playing, and was employed in a piece of fancy work of some sort. Her father approached her, and sat down. He took her hand in his, and kissing her, drew her to him.

“ Why father you are quite loving to your daughter this morning,” she said, — kissing him affectionately in return.

“ And am I not always so, dear ? ” he answered.

“ Oh, yes, father ; but I mean you are suspiciously so now. What do you want of your little Princess ? ”

“ My dear child, you have heard me speak several times of Mr. Clarke, in Paris, have you not ? ”

“ Yes, father,” she answered, “ often indeed.”

“ And you have also noticed that I have refused many offers for your hand, — George Hastings, excepted.”

“ I have also noticed that, and, father forgive me ; sometimes, — wonderingly.”

“Well,” continued the old gentleman, “I had a motive in refusing you to all of them. You are the light of our lives. The only one of six that is left to us, and I feel in no hurry to part with you. You are a young woman yet, only twenty-two, and when I refused you to different young men, I had your welfare at heart. Besides, I knew that you were not in love with any of them, and felt secure. Had I thought you preferred or loved any one in particular, I would have acted differently. Am I right, when I say that you have not loved as yet?”

She answered unhesitatingly — “You are perfectly right, father, as yet my heart beats for no man. This I may say with perfect truth.”

“Well, to proceed,” said her father, “I have told you that I have done this because I had an object. Do you know what that object is? Have you no suspicion why I have never encouraged any suitor for your hand?”

“No, father, I have none. I knew that I was too young to marry, and I was perfectly sure that when the man appears, — whoever he may be — who holds the power to place love in my heart — (and you may be sure I shall love no one unworthy of me) — I am confident of your approval.”

“Well, I have just such a husband for you. He has been my choice for the past fifteen years — I have watched you both grow up; and I have said that my friend’s son should be my daughter’s husband. And now I am going to take you to see him. He is in Paris. We will leave here on Monday evening for Dover; take the boat the same night for Calais; arrive in Calais in the early morning, and then take the

train for Paris—arriving there on Tuesday evening. The next day you will see your future husband."

When Mr. Eastwood had said he had a husband for her, she had started a little, and as he proceeded to plan their route to the place where this husband was actually waiting for her, she became positively alarmed. And when her father had ceased speaking, she was in such a tremble that she could not answer him at all.

He therefore arose, and calling for her mother, who chanced to be near, kissed her trembling lips, and left the room,—leaving his wife to acquaint Princess more in detail about the matter, which she, with a woman's tact and discretion, and a mother's love understood how to do.

At first Princess was very indignant—especially when she heard she had a beautiful French girl as a rival. Her mother did not hide from her the fact, that she would have to counteract this girl's influence; but did not tell her daughter as she should have done, that Louis' mother was against his marrying an English girl, she kept this back from a sense of pride.

Miss Eastwood listened to her mother, and silently accepted the passage of arms between herself and this girl, who had been invited to stay under the same roof with the man who had been selected years ago as her husband. Therefore when her mother bade her put up her best dresses, it was with the determination to spare no pains in her toilet, during her stay in Paris.

"Mother," said Princess, "tell me, when have you seen this gentleman, to whom I have been engaged ever since I was a child, but whom I can't remember?"

"I have not seen him for years. But your

father saw him about three months ago, and even then he did not say anything about it to him. To be candid I never did like the idea, and I told your father so at the time, you were then a little tot of a thing, and he about ten years old. And I suppose he has forgotten you as completely as possible."

"We will go to Paris, mother, and settle it one way or another. I fancy I am as good as any French girl that breathes; and if he is my betrothed, I will assert my right to him, and then let her interfere with me if she dares."

And Princess looked handsome in her anger. Already feeling an interest in the great battle that was to be fought between herself and Helen Duval.

Her mother approved of her spirit; but warned her against all unladylike actions.

"And now," said she, "You know as much about it as I do, and you must be very careful of your behavior on our arrival in Paris."

She patted her daughter's cheek, and left the room, to attend to her duties about the house.





CHAPTER XIII.

HELEN had been ten days at Madame Clarke's and she had as yet seen nothing of Louis. It is true that his mother had promised that he should not molest her in any way. His picture stood before her all the time. Surely she was not sorry at his absence. But why not come and see his mother?

How could she explain her conduct to him, when he should see her at his parents' house? It was none of his business. Surely his mother could have young lady friends, as well as other people. Very well, if he should come and see her there, and should be rude enough to question her, she would tell him that she loved his parents because they were her friends. But that was no reason why he should expect her to love him. She would treat him as she had always done. Of course she would not be able to shun him so persistently, but would give him no more encouragement now than she did before. Besides had she not promised Monsieur le Abbe not to let him find out her love? She would keep her promise and he should not know it. He should not find it out. Then Helen remembered how constant he had been in his love. She knew he was dying for her, that other girls wanted to marry him, and she smiled at their vain attempt to win him.

In the secret recesses of her heart was the knowledge, that she would marry him some day. But

not for the world would she admit that to any one.

Monsieur le Abbe, and Ninette, and his mother knew of her love for him,— but she did not tell them of her silent intention to marry him. She kept this a secret in her own breast. There was no sin in that. It did no harm to any one. Therefore she resolved to retain that secret at all hazards.

One evening about five o'clock, as she sat in the parlor, reading to herself, the door opened and Madame Clarke entered. She came and sat down close to Helen, taking out her knitting,— as was her custom,— and began to knit.

Helen looked lovingly at the old lady, who was yet remarkably handsome.

She could see clearly the features of Louis. The same eyes, forehead, lips and smile. And suddenly made up her mind to talk to Madame about Louis.

The reader will remember that Louis did not at first know why his mother had so suddenly allowed him to room with his friend Jules. But she had since seen him and told him all about it. Told him that Mademoiselle Duval was stopping with her, and was occupying his room. That he must not seek to come to the house without letting her know of his intended visit. That if he really wanted to marry Mademoiselle Duval he would obey her instructions,— and in time all would be well.

He had obeyed her to the letter, but the desire to see Hida was so strong sometimes, that he could scarcely restrain himself. He had however so far kept his word, and had not been to his parents' house during the time Hida had been there,— now about ten days.

He was getting restless, and determined to see

her as soon as he could convey a message to his mother, and receive an answer.

And she had written for him to come on the evening of the day that Helen had been thinking about him. And it was to speak about that very subject that Madame had come into the parlor.

Therefore when Helen had made up her mind to speak about Louis, it chanced to be the very subject that was uppermost in Madame's thoughts,— but unknown of course to Helen.

Again, it chanced that Helen was to broach the subject, which she did in the following manner, speaking slowly and holding her head down, at the time.

“Madame you will remember that when you visited me at Madame St. Claire's you had not been in the room a quarter of an hour before you found out that I loved your son Louis.

“He had been trying vainly for three years to arrive at that knowledge and could not. He does not know it yet, unless you have betrayed me. I told you my reasons for suppressing my love. I also told you that I was an orphan, living alone with an old companion, only. That what I earned at Madame's was sufficient to pay for my wants. I told you all this, and you replied, that you wished to love me, because you had found out that I loved your son. You made me promise to try and love you as a mother, and finally invited me here.

“You promised that your son should not molest me in any way. Now, when you said that, I never supposed you were going to drive him away, altogether. I never thought you or his father would consent to any such arrangement, therefore I entreat you to be less rigorous, and permit him to come here as often as he pleases. His visits can

do no harm to me, and he will be the happier for them."

Madame listened to her, with pleasure depicted in every lineament of her handsome face. She was glad beyond expression,— was now perfectly sure, if she ever had any doubts, that her son had made a wise choice. She also felt equally sure of her own love for Helen, and resolved to tell her she had on that very day received a message from Louis, asking permission to call.

"But what have you answered, Madame?" replied Helen,— blushing.

"I told him that he could come this evening, at seven o'clock; and it is now half-past five. He will be here in an hour,— but you need not see him, unless you choose."

Helen had become deathly pale, but at this remark, she forced the color into her cheeks and answered:

"I know of no reason why, as an inmate of your family, I should not see him. I don't suppose he will speak of love here to me, at our first meeting. He would understand the impropriety of doing such a thing — it would be ungentlemanly in the extreme. He will not do that I am sure, therefore Madame if you wish it, I shall remain with you."

"Very well, Helen, prepare yourself, as he will be here shortly."

Madame arose, kissed her and left the room smiling.

Helen waited until her back was turned, then flew upstairs to her own room, she gazed at the portrait of Louis, over the mantle, and thought she saw a loving look in its eyes. And she said:

"I know that you love me, sir! There is immeasurable happiness in that. But you do not

know that your love is returned. If you keep on the way you have been doing, the knowledge will come to you in time."

She then thought it necessary to make a change in her toilet.

Ever since her mother's death Helen had worn black at all times. She fancied that she looked best in that color, — so concluded to retain the dress that she had on — adding a simple collar.

And selecting a rose from several that stood in a vase on the mantle, she put it in her splendid locks — then taking a black fan with fringe of the same color, and placing her handkerchief in her belt, left the room and went down stairs, just in time to meet Monsieur Clarke as he entered the house.





CHAPTER XIV.

LOUIS and his friend Jules slept until six o'clock the next morning, — Monday, — Louis was the first to get up, he then called his friend. That young gentleman likewise left his bed, and the two began to make their toilet, — talking all the while.

Louis had thought of his visit to Madame de Artice, in the Rue Bastile and he had promised to have a little fun with Jules, for comparing Sabine with Helen. He therefore began by saying to him.

“ I say, Jules, what do you mean by telling me your sweetheart is as handsome as mine, eh ? ”

Jules smiled grimly, and replied:

“ I think so still, my dear fellow ; for she is an angel in my eyes, and long before three years shall have passed, she will be my wife. Now, Louis, it has taken you all that time already, and you do not know yet whether your Helen loves you or not. Now tell me, which is the handsomer of the two ? Sabine is satisfied with my wooing and lets me speak sweet words in her ear, but Helen will not permit you in any case to make love to her.”

“ I am convinced of one thing, Jules,” Louis replied, “ That is, the man who marries Helen will get a pearl beyond price. She may be hard to win, — but when she is won, she will wear true until death. Therefore I am content to await her pleasure, feeling that I shall lose nothing but will

gain a mine of wealth, in her true and steadfast love."

" You are right, Louis. I also think as you do, and I hope that she will soon make you happy. As happy as you deserve to be."

After a pause he continued:

" Are you going to call on Monsieur Glenham, at the Hotel Meurice, to-night?"

" Certainly, and take you with me. We shall have to appear in evening dress, I dare say."

" Of course," said his friend, " You will have to come home a little earlier than usual, so that we may instruct each other in the mysteries of dress and good manners. These English folks are well up in such things."

" Oh ! I will be here soon enough for that," he said.

By this time they were ready, having finished dressing.

Jules opened the shop, and commenced his daily labors, and his friend went to his office in the Rue Scribe.

Mademoiselle Cora Dubois' wedding day was fast approaching. So near, that she had asked her friend Helen to direct and superintend the making of her dresses for the eventful occasion.

She was going to have them made at her own home, in the Rue Dunkirk, she had bought the materials some time ago, and now was going to have them all made up, under the guidance and artistic taste of her friend.

She therefore invited Helen to come home with her, and give the necessary directions, which Helen gladly promised to do.

Since Helen had been stopping at Madame Clarke's, Madame St. Claire had permitted her to leave at four o'clock — and she consequently had plenty of time.

Madame St. Claire knew of Cora's approaching nuptials, and had also given her permission to come and go as she pleased.

That afternoon the two girls left the shop at three o'clock and went to Cora's home. There were assembled quite a bevy of girls, to assist Cora in making her trousseau, — They were all unmarried, and all sweet and young. Helen was introduced to them. Then the bundles of finery were brought out for inspection. There were silks and satins, woolens, brocades, muslins, linens, calicoes, prints, laces, and every description of materials, of all sorts of shades and colors.

The girls one and all were in a heaven of delight. Helen from the start had her hands full. This she saw was going to be a task that would bring all her powers to the front. First Clotilde would propose this only to be met by a sharp opposition from Flora. Then Flora in her turn would be opposed and borne down by two or three other girls. But all was done in a friendly spirit and good will towards each other.

Madame Dubois sat silently by admiring the whole arrangement and now and then agreeing with this or that girl, as they appealed to her as a sort of umpire.

They finally got the matter in working order and allowed Helen to select what she thought was best for this or that dress explaining her reason in a business-like way that all the girls admired very much.

The two largest tables in the house had been selected to work on and Helen gave each girl a piece

of work to do, the same as she would have done at Madame St. Claire's.

Helen and Cora sat close to the tables to do the most important parts. Everything was going on in splendid shape.

They were sitting close enough to each other to hold a conversation unheard by the others.

Helen was saying "you are going to be married soon now, Cora, and I suppose we will have to make up our minds to your loss from our ranks. I hope that you love Monsieur Victor and he loves you."

Cora sighed, but replied ; "Certainly I love him, Helen, and if I did not I would not marry him. And as to his loving me, he does not worship me as Monsieur Louis does you ; but his love is true enough.

"When will you let him get a little nearer to you ? I tell you, Helen, you treat him shamefully and he bears it beautifully.

"You are my friend, Helen, and I hope you will not be offended at what I am going to say."

"Speak freely, Cora, I shall not be offended at anything you say."

"Well," said Cora, "Louis need not follow you as he is doing. It is a proof of his love for you. He can marry two girls with money if he wishes."

Helen paled at this, but said to her friend in a voice perfectly steady :

"Tell me their names, will you not ?"

"Well, I will ; it can do you no harm, nor they either. Roxabella Ormonde is one.

"Her father is a florist in the Rue Scribe, close to where Louis works. And the other you know very well because you have seen her often enough on your way home from Madame's."

"But, tell me who is she ; tell me her name ?" said Helen.

"Don't you know this one either ? Well, it is Louise Marville, the modiste, in the Boulevard Magenta.

"Both of these girls have money in plenty and would marry your lover quick enough, I can tell you.

"Anyhow, be a little kinder to the poor fellow ; he has loved you long enough."

"Monsieur Louis can marry either of these girls, if he pleases, I am not to be forced into wedlock, I am going to take my time," she said.

"Very well," said Cora, "but there is Fanchette coming to you for directions," and the conversation dropped for the present.

As soon as Fanchette had retired, the girls renewed their conversation.

"Yes," said Cora, "although I am your friend and have known you so long, you have never told me your reasons for so persistently keeping Louis at a distance. Is it because you do not love him, or that you are too young to marry or what ?"

"You have guessed rightly—I am too young to marry," said she simply.

Cora looked at her friend and smiled. Then she said :—

"Helen, do you know that you are one of the loveliest girls in Paris ?

"You are certainly the most beautiful one of my acquaintance, and you could marry almost anyone."

"I take no delight in being so. My face will be the property of one man, only ; and not for all Paris," said Helen seriously.

"And that man is Louis, is it not ?" asked Cora, also speaking seriously.

"Possibly," replied Helen, and that was all she said.



CHAPTER XV.

VICTOR St. Mar generally came to see his love about six o'clock in the evening. He had arrived soon after the conversation that we have related in the last chapter; and the two young ladies were once more busy at their pleasant task. We say pleasant, because all girls like to be connected in some way with the mysteries of a trousseau.

He had come as usual, and had inquired for his sweetheart, only to be informed that she could not see him then. But, being persistent, Cora came to him for a few moments. She brought him into the room where the young ladies were, and told him to look around, and then ask himself if he had the nerve to remain there much longer. He took the hint, and knowing all the ladies there assembled, he bowed — first, deeply to Helen individually, and to the other girls collectively, fled from the room. He was shortly after to be seen with his friend Henri Dubois sitting in front of his favorite café.

Mistress Eastwood had made her preparations for leaving London in accordance with her husband's orders. So on the following Monday morning, father, mother, and daughter could be seen making

their way to Charing Cross Station to catch the first train for Dover, which left at half-past eight.

Mr. Eastwood had seen the ladies to the waiting-room, and went to secure their tickets. He returned in a few minutes with the tickets, and the three took their places in the cars. The engine began to puff and grunt and shortly flew out of the station, carrying our three friends to Dover, from whence they would cross over into France. In five hours' time the train arrived at Dover, and the passengers were transferred to the steamer that was to take them to Calais.

There were quite a number of them, it being in the month of July, and rather pleasant for traveling. Lords and ladies, merchants, shopkeepers, lawyers, ministers, and every one who could spare the time and money. They formed a motley crowd. There was young Mr. Morgan, who was going across for pleasure, and was talking to the Honorable Milton Dashby.

The Honorable Milton Dashby was saying :—

“ I do not think that I shall be seasick at all. I have been over lots of times, you know, and I have always got along first rate.”

Here a young man who was sitting on one of the seats close by, interfered unceremoniously with the remark “ that the gentleman need not be so confident. Because,” said this person, “ I am going to be, and you may be also. There is no telling beforehand.”

The Honorable Mr. Dashby merely turned his head, like a pivot, around, and looking over his collar at this audacious personage, sniffed the air and remarked “ that there couldn’t possibly be any comparison whatever between himself and the gentleman who had spoken last.”

"Oh, no offense ; you need not be so angry at a friendly suggestion," said this individual. "I meant no harm, only I thought you were rather confident ; that's all."

Mr. Morgan here took the arm of the Honorable Milton Dashby and they went to the forward part of the boat.

The steamer was to leave the wharf at two o'clock, and it being near that time now, the captain gave orders to haul in the gang-plank. The quarter-master sang out twice, "All hands aboard." The engines began to work ; the paddles to go around ; the last line was thrown off from the wharf, and was hauled in on board by the sailors. The passengers took out their handkerchiefs and began to waive their adieu to friends on shore. Their friends, in return, doing the same and the steamer passed slowly out of the "Harbor" on her trip to Calais.

The trip from Dover to Calais is always a most remarkable one, arising from the fact that it being only a short piece of sea, persons are mistaken often as to the state of the weather. You cannot depend upon the weather in the Straits of Dover. It will be as calm as a mill-pond at one time and in half an hour it will be blowing a gale with seas mountain high.

Consequently, passengers who have passed over this week from Paris and had a pleasant trip without being sick, may on their return trip to Paris, experience all the horrors of sea-sickness.

It proved to be so on this trip. The steamer had proceeded about a quarter of a mile on her way before anybody had succumbed to the pitching and tossing. Then their effects began to be observed.

First you would see a young lady who had been laughing and talking a few moments before with her

lover become suddenly interested in some object on one side of the steamer. And her lover who had hitherto been all smiles and had been entirely devoted to her, looking forward earnestly and steadily. He also became absorbed in something that seemed to demand his immediate attention.

He would then arise, go forward and transact his business and return, looking cautiously around to see who had been watching him.

He might, however, save himself the trouble for, ten to one, all the other passengers have been employed in the same urgent matter.

The Honorable Milton Dashby, who had been so confident was the first to be attacked. He tried heroically to stave it off. But the fates were against him and he became as sick as a cat, while the strange young man who had expected to be, was as lively as a cricket and not at all sick. He, however, was too generous to laugh at the Honorable Mr. Dashby.

Mr. Morgan was also sick, and laid down and groaned in a most dismal manner. In short, they were all sick, more or less.

The stewardess did the best she could for the ladies, but they were too helpless to appreciate her endeavors in their behalf.

Those fortunate ones who had gone, directly on their arrival on board, to their staterooms fared better. They simply laid down in their berths and cried or smiled as they felt disposed.

But those who remained on deck had, as soon as they became sick, no alternative but to remain where they were in the sun and wind, until the steamer arrived at Calais, because they were too sick to move. The steamer arrived about five o'clock, and was made fast to the wharf. The passengers went up the steps to the custom house, and had

their luggage inspected, and to wait for the train that was to take them to Paris.

Mr. Eastwood had been, with his wife and daughter, one of the fortunate voyagers who had repaired immediately to their stateroom on boarding the steamer. They had been sick, of course, but they had not been exposed to the heat of the sun, and were not in such a dilapidated condition as were several of the passengers.

They all went to different hotels to refresh themselves and to express their various opinions on the passage across the Strait of Dover.

The train for Paris was to leave at seven o'clock, thus giving them two hours in which to recuperate.

They were all snugly packed away in the train by that time, and at sharp seven left the depot for Paris.

It was getting dark by this time, and the passengers could not see much of the scenery.

They therefore began to compose themselves as best they could, indulging in short naps, and carrying on broken conversations. In this way they passed the time until they reached Paris at half-past twelve.

The passengers made a rush for the cabs that stood in a line along the Boulevard Magenta, and were driven to their various hotels.





CHAPTER XVI.

MR. EASTWOOD, his wife and daughter were driven to the Hotel Mirebeau and went to bed. It being only one o'clock, they would yet have plenty of time to rest. They slept soundly and awoke about eight o'clock the next morning.

After having breakfast, Mr. Eastwood dispatched a note to his friend Clarke in the Faubourg St. Honore, acquainting him of his arrival in Paris, and asking him to call at the hotel Mirebeau.

Monsieur Clarke received his note in due time, and shortly afterwards answered it in person.

The two old gentlemen then proposed to bring Louis and Princess together as soon as practicable; and after vowing to carry out their scheme at all hazards, they parted, Monsieur Clarke returning to his home in the Faubourg St. Honore.

“But man proposes and God disposes.”

Princess and her mother had been introduced to Monsieur Clarke, and had remained in the room a short time. They had then retired, leaving the two old gentlemen together.

Mr. Eastwood was anxious to see Louis, but Monsieur Clarke had some dread, now that he had gone so far, as to how he should proceed.

He had expressed his unqualified satisfaction of his intended daughter-in-law to her father after she

had left the room ; but he now began to think of his wife. He loved her, it is true, and she also loved him, but he had always secretly stood in awe of her. She was so firm, so prompt of action, that he was as yet undecided how to act, how to break the matter to her.

And again, what would Louis himself do in the matter ?

He had always been a dutiful son, but he was a man grown, and he would naturally like to have some say in the disposal of himself in marriage.

If, after the matter had been placed before him, he should show a disposition to resent his father's interference, backed by his mother, what then could he do ?

Louis had often heard him say that there was an English girl, who had been chosen for him since his childhood.

But, argued Monsieur Clarke, had he believed him or not ?

He had heard his wife say that Louis was in love with a French girl, but he never really believed it. He had agreed with her, and that was all.

But lately he had seen enough to compel him to act. He had found out that his wife was determined to marry Louis to this Mademoiselle Helen, who was at present staying at their house. His son had been sent away by his mother with no other object, but to bring them together again, under the same roof, after a little while.

He now began to see through the whole business, He was sure that Helen was a lady in every respect, could find no fault with her manners or her general conduct ; and knew that after Louis should have seen Miss Eastwood if he had ever loved, or did

love Helen, that he would continue to do so, with a greater force than ever.

For he had to admit to himself although he was loathe to do it — that Helen was in every way superior to Princess ; and that Louis had made a wise choice.

He was worried, then, to know how to proceed, and all that afternoon sat pondering how he should go on with the scheme, that he and his friend had planned so long ago.

He was saved a good deal of trouble, however, by the unexpected sickness of no less a person, than Miss Princess Eastwood.

On the evening of the day that she had been introduced to Monsieur Clarke, her father, mother and herself had gone out for a walk, intending to stay a short time only as they did not wish to be seen much in Paris. They had returned in an hour's time, and divested themselves of their outdoor apparel, when Princess began to complain of a violent headache.

Her mother paid her every attention giving her all those remedies that that tedious complaint requires.

And she had retired feeling better.

But, during the night, she again complained of the same trouble, aggravated by fever.

Her parents became greatly alarmed, and the resident physician of the hotel was called.

Her complaint was pronounced to be a violent fever. He said that she would have to be very careful ; and not go out of the room.

He wrote a prescription, giving strict orders regarding diet.

He met her father outside, to whom he was more confidential : and imparted to him the fact that his

daughter was going to be very ill, and that he could not be too careful.

He promised to call again in the early morning, to see how she had progressed during the night.

He came about six o'clock and found that she was as bad as ever, told her parents to continue with the remedies he had prescribed — and again took his departure.

Mr. Eastwood sent a messenger to the house of his friend, telling him about his daughter's illness. And the old gentleman came the same evening to condole with the afflicted parents.

Princess remained in that state for ten days, at the end of which time she could leave her room and go down stairs.

And it was on the very evening that Louis was to visit his mother, that she had come down stairs for the first time since her sickness.

And Monsieur Clarke had just returned from her hotel, — in fact had just entered the house — when he encountered Helen ; as has been described a few pages back.

Monsieur Clarke had not told his wife of all these events, he had kept them to himself. But would have to tell her now that Princess was better, or he would not be able to make Louis and Princess acquainted.

Her parents would not consent to, nor neither would he have proposed a clandestine meeting between the two young persons. He felt also that it would be an insult to Miss Eastwood. And was determined then to tell his wife the whole affair in the morning and fight the matter out at once.

This was his determination when he met Helen so unexpectedly.

He did not know that Louis was to visit them

that night, and when Helen led the way to the parlor he followed all unprepared for the events that were about to ensue.

Louis had arrived at the house during Helen's absence from the room. And while she was making her simple toilet up stairs, he was in the parlor with his mother.

She at first wished to go and inform Helen of this, but Louis pleaded so earnestly with her not to do it, that she desisted.

Madame, however, warned him not to take advantage of any discovery he might make, when Helen should enter the room, and find him there. "And above every thing, you must not attempt to make love to her.

"If you do, she will never forgive you — never marry you."

Louis promised his mother to do as she said. And it was just at this time Helen opened the door, and entered — followed by Monsieur Clarke. Then she caught sight of Louis as he sat a little behind his mother. And she gazed at him, blushing from the roots of her hair.

Her lovely cheeks and throat became scarlet — and for the second time, Helen had betrayed her love for Louis Clarke. This time, he himself had found it out.

But she was not long in recovering her surprise and as he had arisen to meet her, she placed her beautiful hand in his, and said :

"I am glad to see you Monsieur.

"Why have you kept away from your home, so long?"

Louis answered, "Mademoiselle has forgotten that it is not yet two weeks since I have been here, and

I have heard frequently from home. I have not been out of Paris, Mademoiselle."

She took the nearest chair and sat down ; Louis doing the same — sitting a little apart from her.

She was herself again in spite of the terrible ordeal she had just gone through.

Helen spoke again, this time addressing Monsieur Clarke.

" Monsieur, you appear to have a good deal of business, outside, lately.

" Do you not require Monsieur Louis to assist you ? It is time that he took all heavy business off your hands. — What say you Madame ? "

Monsieur Clarke said that he went out evenings to the cafés, to spend an hour or so with his old cronies. And he found the exercise did him a great deal of good. — And his wife said, that she could not see why he wanted to stay out in the evening air, when he knew that he was subject to rheumatic pains in the back.

" But, what does Monsieur Louis say ? " persisted she.

" Oh ! Mademoiselle, my father has only to command me in all things. He knows that he need not fatigue himself any more with a son as big and useless as myself."

" Monsieur is modest," replied Helen, smiling. " You are stopping with your friend, Jules Bertram, are you not ? " she asked.

" Yes, Mademoiselle, I am stopping with him ; he is my dearest friend, and knows all my troubles."

Helen looked disconcerted at this reply, and held her eyes down for a second ; then she raised them again and said :

" Monsieur, do you stay out late nights ? Do you visit the theatre much ? "

"Sometimes, Mademoiselle, not often," he replied.

"Have you been to one lately?" she said, "in company with Jules?"

"I have, Mademoiselle."

She changed the subject and spoke on general topics.

It was by this time getting late, past the bedtime of his parents, and Louis arose to leave, first expressing his delight at having been so fortunate as to have met Mademoiselle.

Then kissing his mother, and shaking hands with his father, he was about to bow to Helen and retire, when she arose from her chair and gave him her hand. He kissed it respectfully, smiled down at her, and was gone.





CHAPTER XVII.

LOUIS returned home as he promised his room-mate, earlier than usual, and after resting, he and Jules went across the street to get their supper.

They did not occupy much time over their meal ; it was soon finished and they left the restaurant.

They had to make a fine toilet, as the reader is aware, and accordingly they were going to take a little more pains than ordinary.

On entering the house, Jules found a letter awaiting him. It had arrived just after he had left to go to his supper, and one of his workmen had received it. It was from his sister, who was at a convent in Paris. His sister wrote :

DEAR BROTHER :

I have had permission from the Mother Superior to write to you. I hope that you are well and happy, and that you are good also. The Mother Superior says if you are, she will let you come and see me. You should be so glad to hear that.

My best friend is here with me in the convent, so I am very happy, only I wish to see you sometimes, of course.

Do you ever see the young lady who used to live next to us in the park Moncieu, before father died ? Her name is Helen Duval. If you should, tell her that I think a good deal of her. You remember how lovely she was ? Do you know if she is married yet ? She will be a good woman always. I know she would be a good Mother Superior.

I will be fourteen years old in September, just two months more. I am getting quite old, am I not?

My dear brother, I hope you always remember your sister.

I will not write any more now, but hope to see you soon.

Remember me to all my friends. Madame Gervaise sends her respects to you. No more. But remember always

Your loving sister,

RUBY BERTRAM.

Jules read the above epistle with a good deal of feeling. He loved his sister Ruby very much. She was a pretty little maid, and had been to the convent ever since his mother's death, about six years. Her prevailing impression was that there was no other man on the face of the earth like her brother. And she was continually writing and telling him to be good.

Louis knew Ruby very well and always liked her, and was glad to hear that she was happy. He was also glad to hear that she loved Helen.

Then Jules and Louis began to dress for their visit to Mr. Glenham at the hotel Meurice.

They were going in full evening dress, and meant to do themselves justice on the occasion. During the process of dressing they began to talk about the encounter Mr. Glenham had with Lord Upham, and wondered if they should hear any more of it.

Louis predicted that Lord Upham had sent a challenge to Mr. Glenham, and Jules acquiesced with him, and both of them fully expected to hear on their arrival at the hotel, that Mr. Glenham had been challenged by his Lordship.

They were now quite ready, and leaving the place in charge of Monsieur Goulard, as they had done before, went out promising to return early.

Then calling a passing fiacre, they entered and were driven to the hotel Meurice.

They were shown the rooms occupied by Mr. Glenham and his wife.

On ringing the bell, the door was opened by Mr. Glenham in person. He expressed great pleasure, placed chairs for them, and retired to call his wife. He returned shortly and presented her to the two friends.

Mrs. Glenham was an English lady of great beauty. A perfect blonde, tall and well made.

She brought her little daughter with her. Her mother told them her name was Maud Ethel. She was a perfect picture of her beautiful mother, who appeared to take great delight in her precious child.

Mrs. Glenham remained some time in the room conversing, and then left them to order refreshments.

After she had retired, Mr. Glenham told the two friends that he had arrived safely on the previous evening in time to relieve the anxiety of his wife, who had become anxious about him.

He also told them he had not heard anything of Lord Upham as yet. That he did not anticipate any further trouble from that gentleman, Lord Upham knowing he had acted indiscreetly would be glad enough to let the affair be forgotten.

In regard to the other Englishmen, who were present at the time, they all had heard of his Lordship, and knew that he was no coward ; and on their not hearing any more of the affair, would conclude that it had been amicably settled.

The friends on hearing this were bound to make some reply, and Louis as the principal party invited replied that he was glad to hear the affair had ended in that quiet way. He ventured to express the hope

that it would be a check to his Lordship's pursuit of the lady in question, and intimated that in the event of there being any further trouble, Mr. Glenham could rely upon his assistance to carry the matter safely and without publicity to a satisfactory termination.

Any further remarks were cut short by the entrance of Mrs. Glenham followed by a servant with refreshments.

A side-table was placed, and they proceeded to indulge in the things that had been prepared for them.

Louis toasted Mrs. Glenham, and Jules drank the health of the child.

They enjoyed themselves quietly for an hour or two, and then arose to take leave of their hosts, thanking them for the manner in which they had been received.

Mrs. Glenham shook hands with them both, and Mr. Glenham went with them down the stairs and shaking hands, told them they were welcome to call at any time during his stay in Paris, which he said would be for about six weeks.

They thanked him and left the hotel, and Mr. Glenham went back upstairs to his beautiful wife and daughter.





CHAPTER XVIII.

LOUIS and Jules returned quite early, and made up their mind to stay at home the rest of the evening, and enjoy themselves.

Jules had been to see his sweetheart several times, and was more and more infatuated with the charming Sabine.

He had made inquiries about the Rolands, and had been told that they had not yet found their money. That the insurance people were doing their best to settle matters. And that their friends had all come forward and assisted them, headed by Monsieur de Artice.

Louis was glad to hear it ; and had said gallantly to Mademoiselle Sabine, " That any friends of hers, in whom she was interested, were likewise objects of importance to him, in whom he should never cease to interest himself."

Jules was not going to see Sabine this evening, however ; remaining at home as we have said.

He had several things to see to, letters to answer, and other matters connected with his business.

But he first intended to have some conversation with his friend Louis, relative to the progress he was making, with the beautiful but cold Helen Duval.

Accordingly after they had divested themselves of their dresscoats, and had each put on his smoking jacket, Jules began to question his friend.

He first inquired of Louis when he had last seen Helen.

Louis answered that he had seen her the previous evening.

He had told Jules before that she had been invited by his mother to stay with her for a time, and that was the reason why he had come to stay with him, — his mother not permitting him to remain in the house during Helen's visit there.

All these things Jules knew very well, — but could not understand how it was, that Madame his mother, had so suddenly taken a liking to Mademoiselle.

Why had she not done this before ?

She knew that Louis had been in love with Helen all this time.

Then why had she not interfered before this ? He, however, continued to question his friend.

"Had she treated him kindly ?"

"Yes, she had," he replied, and he thereupon related all that had taken place at the meeting, at his mother's. How he had arrived there, and found his mother alone, in the parlor. That she had told him Helen had just gone up stairs to her room. The promise Helen had made to receive him kindly, and the promise he had made to his mother, not to speak words of love to her. He told Jules, that shortly after entering the house, Helen had returned to the parlor, accompanied by his father.

Related to him exactly how the meeting had taken place ; her surprise at beholding him ; her blushes and confusion, — and quick recovery, — finally telling him the whole conversation exactly as it had taken place.

How on his arising to take his leave, Helen had

given him her hand. How he had respectfully kissed it. And had at last torn himself away; leaving her standing in the room, with her eyes following him through the door, and out into the street.

Jules listened with pleasure to his friend's recital of the meeting with his sweetheart, and when he had concluded, arose and taking Louis' hand, shook it heartily,— remarking as he did so.

"My friend, you have at last won the best woman in Paris. — You have loved her long, and truly. And she will now repay you ten-fold. I am exceedingly glad to hear it," he added fervently.

"But why did you not tell me last night?"

"Well, you see," said Louis, "I was so happy I could think of nothing else the whole evening."

"Well, said Jules," "I suppose you are satisfied now, eh, my friend?"

"Oh, yes more than satisfied. I am the happiest man in Paris, to-night. But I must be careful how I woo her. She is not like other women, where her heart is concerned."

"You are right, but what do you think she meant by asking you about the theatres? Do you think that after a little time, when she permits you to be more with her, she will object to your visiting them?"

"Hardly, but remember I told you it was about the lateness of the hour, that she inquired principally of me."

"Ah, yes. The same night we were at the *café*, and met Monsieur Glenham," said Jules.

"But, *sacré*, how could she know that Louis?"

"Ah, that I do not know at all. We were out until three o'clock, was is not?" said Louis.

"Very near it," answered Jules. "I suppose the

next thing will be your orders to return home and woo Helen, leaving me here alone."

"Not so," said Louis, "I am persuaded that she will now return to her own cottage after what has taken place. I am perfectly sure she will," he added dolefully.

Jules told him to hope for the best. Then arising and going to his desk, he brought out his writing materials, and told Louis to get a book and read, or otherwise amuse himself, prepared to devote some time to his correspondence.

Louis did not immediately follow the suggestion made by his friend. He sat pondering for a while, then arose and went to his friend's library, and selecting a book, returned and was soon deeply interested in its contents.





CHAPTER XIX.

JULES BERTRAM saw a good deal of his sweetheart, Mademoiselle Sabine, and they were very much in love with each other. Her mother would not permit him to take her out alone so soon in their courtship.

She knew that Jules would before long ask for her daughter's hand in marriage.

She liked him better than any other young man of her acquaintance, and was sure that her husband liked him also. Therefore there could be no reasonable objection to their engagement when Jules should ask for her.

One morning, father, mother and daughter sat at breakfast. They were enjoying the meal, which was Monsieur de Artice's principal one with his family. He usually left home immediately after to attend to his business in the Rue Marlesherbes, and would not return until the afternoon.

On this particular morning before leaving the house, he called Sabine to him as he was putting on his gloves, and patting her on the cheek, said laughingly that he wanted to know what to say to Monsieur Jules Bertram, when that gentleman should ask for his darling daughter's hand. Sabine blushed beautifully, kissed her father, and said she had nothing to say against Monsieur Jules.

She liked him very well, and would leave the rest to her parents, and would do as they commanded her. Monsieur kissed her and left the house, know-

ing that whenever Jules should ask him for his daughter Sabine, he could give her to him without fear, because he saw she loved him sufficiently to become his wife. He took his way to his business expecting to hear from Jules before many days passed.

Cora Dubois' friends made rapid progress with her trousseau. Under Helen's supervision everything was done neatly and artistically.

Cora very seldom went to Madame St. Claire's at all. She found all that she could do at home. She only saw Victor for half an hour when he came to the house. The rest of the time she would be at work.

The girls had all inquired of Cora if her friend, Mademoiselle Duval, had a lover; and Cora told them about Louis, whom she said loved her friend dearly, but was not permitted by Helen to make any advance in his suit for reasons best known to herself.

One day as the girls sat busily working, Cora's mother entered the room with a letter for her daughter, and on opening it, she was surprised to find it was from her friend Helen.

The letter ran :

MY DEAR CORA :

Will you come to my house to-night ? I have returned home to old Ninette and my garden.

In the mean time, let me tell you a secret : he has found it out. I could not help it, I assure you ; but I am very happy, and hope to see you to-night, and then I will tell you how it all happened.

Your friend,

HELEN.

Cora smiled when she had finished reading Helen's

letter. She put it in her pocket, remarking to her mother that she would tell her about it bye and bye.

Pauline here ventured to inquire of Cora what had become of Helen all that day.

"Oh, she will be here to-morrow," said Cora.

She would say nothing more, however, about Helen and changed the conversation.

One of the girls who sat nearest to Cora asked her how she felt now that her marriage was so soon to take place.

"Why, how should she feel but happy? I am sure I should if I were going to be married in less than two months, and so would you, Fanchette," she added, smiling.

Cora replied that she felt just as Josephine had said, perfectly happy. "Because," I love Victor, and he loves me, and will make me a good husband. He is a dear fellow," she said, "and worthy of my love."

"Where will you live when you are married, Cora?" asked Fanchette.

"Mother will not let us live anywhere but here. The house is large enough, you know, and we will live here and take care of her."

"But what does Victor say to that plan?" asked Josephine. "Does he like it, Cora?"

"Certainly, why should he not like it?" she said. "We will make one family as before. I shall have my rooms in the upper part of the house, and mother will continue to live where she is. Henri, also, is pleased with the idea, so it is all settled satisfactorily to everyone."

Josephine and Fanchette did not ask any more questions, but stitched away merrily.

They each had their prospective beaux, and were

both handsome girls. Josephine was about sixteen years old, and Fanchette a year or two younger.

Fanchette's oldest sister worked at Madame St. Claire's, and would stop in sometimes of a morning on her way to work to see how Cora's dresses were progressing.

Madame St. Claire, also, would occasionally come to look on. She knew all the girls, and was happy in looking at their busy fingers.

She would sit down and talk to Madame Dubois for hours, and then return to her house again.

On her returning to the house, one morning, after one of these visits, she was handed a note from Helen, asking her to excuse her from coming at all that day, but not to worry about her in the least, as she was quite well and happy.

She said she would be at her work again the next day, and then would explain her absence; hoped Madame would not be put out or angry with her, and sent her love to Madame and the girls.

Madame St. Claire felt relieved.

She had wondered why Helen had not come to the shop; and was just going to send one of the other young ladies to Madame Clarke's to inquire after her.

She therefore told the young ladies, that Mademoiselle Duval would not be there that day.

That they need be in no alarm about her, she was not sick nor anything of that sort, but had sent her love to them, and would be there on the following day.

The young ladies were glad to hear that Helen was not sick, and expressed their deep regret at her absence, thanking her, through Madame for her love to them, and said they would try to make as few mistakes as possible.

Madame St. Claire then left the girls to themselves — knowing that they would keep their word. The young ladies worked that day, better than they ever did before — determined to gain the approbation of Helen, when she should arrive the next day, and inspect their work.





CHAPTER XX.

WHEN Helen Duval entered the room and was confronted by the sight of Louis Clarke, she became for the moment so bewildered, astonished, and ashamed, that she lost all control of her feelings for a second, — no longer.

Then pride and anger came to her relief, and by a superhuman effort, forced herself into a calmness that she was far from feeling. She saw before her the man, whose heart was in her keeping.

The man whom she loved, although he knew it not.

He of whom she had been thinking only a few moments before — appear before her without the least warning.

It was more than she was prepared for. It was no wonder her heart betrayed her.

Although she had lost self-control for just one second, it was time enough for him to see the burning blush that mantled her brow, face, and throat, and knew he had found out, what she had sedulously hidden from him, so long, and so persistently.

She had given him her hand, and compelled her voice to speak coherently.

Had her life depended upon it, she could not have acted differently.

It was so sudden, — so unlooked for.

She had told the tale as plainly as if she had shouted it in his ears ; and then he had shaken her

hand, and she had felt the thrill that ran through her frame.

And knew that come weal or woe, she was his for the remainder of her natural life.

Was she angry with him ?

We think not. She had held her part in the conversation that followed creditably. Of that she was sure.

Had inquired of him, why he came not to see his parents, in an indifferent voice. She had even gone farther, and asked him why it was that he had been keeping late hours ; and if he was not stopping with his friend Jules Bertram, — the friend to whom she was indebted for the knowledge of him.

These things she had done while her heart was still beating painfully, and when he had, at last, arisen to leave the room, had given him her hand again, he had kissed it and smiled upon her as he left the house.

Then a reaction had taken place ; and she had turned from her gaze on Louis, to confront his mother.

She knew that his father had had no part in thus surprising her. It was Madame then, to whom she looked for an explanation of what had just occurred, and with an angry voice, and blazing eyes, demanded to know why she had been so deceived.

Monsieur Clarke, foreseeing that a scene was about to follow, had hastily left the room. He had seen during the last few minutes, that all his plans for marrying his son to Miss Princess Eastwood, were blown to the winds.

He would, however, make one last effort.

He would introduce Princess to his wife and son. And would appeal to Louis to carry out his wishes.

Mademoiselle Duval, stood expecting a reply from Madame Clarke, who was looking at her with loving eyes.

She then arose and went to Helen, putting her arms around the still angry beauty, and gazing in her lovely eyes, that were dimmed with tears, said in a gentle voice. "Are you angry with me my daughter? Are you vexed with your mother, for what she has done? Then, indeed, I am most unhappy; most unfortunate; I plead guilty.

"I should have told you that he was here, before you entered the room.

"You see my dear Helen, after you had gone up stairs, my son came, half an hour earlier than the time appointed.

"I was sitting here awaiting your return, when he came, and finding me alone, asked for you. I told him that you would be down shortly; and started to acquaint you of his presence.

"But he pleaded with me earnestly not to do so; and promised faithfully to do naught to offend you.

"I lost sight of the fact, that your sudden meeting would disconcert you.

"Wherefore I earnestly entreat you to forgive me, will you not?

"Helen, my daughter, you will break my heart if you refuse to forgive me."

Helen could resist her pleading voice no longer, and throwing her arms around her neck burst into tears.

And the two ladies, one old the other young, wept upon each other's shoulders.

Then Helen leading Madame to the sofa, sat down by her side and dried her eyes.

Madame also ceased to weep.

And taking Helen's plump little hands in her

own, began to soothe and pet her,—until she looked up into the old ladies' eyes, and burst into ringing laughter, joined by Madame Clarke.

But she suddenly stopped laughing and spoke for the first time since she had angrily demanded Madame's reason in deceiving her.

"And now, dear Madame, you will perceive that I must return to my home as soon as possible.

"I cannot remain here any longer," said she. "I have been very happy here, and have enjoyed myself very much.

"But after what your son has seen, I must return to Ninette.

"I am not yet ready to give away my liberty.

"I shall return to-morrow. Of course we shall see each other often, but I will not be your daughter-in-law yet," she said, laughing merrily.

Madame Clarke tried to dissuade her, but she was firm in her determination to return home.

Promising to come and visit her often; and true to her word, the next night she slept in her own room in her own little cottage.

It was on the following morning that she had written the two letters that Cora and Madame St. Claire had received.

Monsieur Clarke left Helen and his wife in the parlor, and went out on the street.

It was after his usual time for going out, but he felt that he needed a little extra composure.

He thought by taking a stroll for half an hour his mind would be more at ease.

So he walked slowly up the Faubourg St. Honore thinking all the while how he would act when telling his wife that Mr. Eastwood and family were in Paris.

And wondered what she would say to him.

He returned home, and found that the stormy scene between his wife and Helen was over, and Helen had retired. Madame had also gone upstairs, where he found her. He had half a mind to tell her then, but decided to wait until morning. But *she* had a good deal to say to *him*. She began by asking him if he had noticed anything unusual in the meeting of her son and Helen that evening in the parlor.

Monsieur replied that he had noticed by Helen's confused manner all the indications of love, but said she could never marry him, as Louis had been promised to his friend's daughter in London, Miss Eastwood.

Madame said she knew of no engagement existing between her son and the lady he had mentioned.

She said she could not see how a contract between two fathers, made years ago, could possibly hold good now, especially as in the present case, where the parties principally concerned were unacquainted with each other.

Monsieur Clarke replied that he had a very exalted opinion of Mademoiselle Duval's beauty and accomplishments.

Personally, he said, he had no objections to her, but he would beg Madame to understand, once for all, that he had other plans for his son and heir.

Madame had kept her temper very well up to this point, but she got angry at last, and spoke sharply to her "lord and master."

She reminded him that the love between her son and Helen was mutual, and told him that it was her desire to see them united ; "and," added she, "no young lady would, if she had any respect for herself, seek to force herself upon a man, if she knew that he loved another woman."

Monsieur felt the force of this reasoning, and resolved to tell his wife, then and there, of his friend's arrival in Paris.

Therefore, without telling her of his share in the matter, made known to her that Monsieur Eastwood and family were already in Paris, and that he had asked them to call on the following day. The invitation had been accepted, and he hoped his wife would receive them with respect, and not to forget that the Eastwoods and Clarkes had lived on friendly terms in London.

Madame said she was willing to receive them on friendly terms only. But when it came to the point of *her* son marrying *their* daughter, that was a different matter.

Monsieur Clarke replied that he would be satisfied if his wife received them in the morning, leaving the rest to time; then he said good-night and retired.

Madame herself was shortly after in the arms of Morpheus.

The next morning about ten o'clock the Eastwoods came.

Madame received them quite civilly, and said she was glad to see them.

When she had left London to return to Paris with her husband, about nineteen years ago, Princess Eastwood was a little baby; now she was a grown woman.

Madame had not seen her since that time, although she had heard from her parents quite often.

Mr. Eastwood she had often seen when he had visited Paris. He had always come alone, however, his wife not liking the voyage.

Thus it happened that Mistress Eastwood and herself had not met for so long a time.

So when Princess was introduced to her, she was surprised for a moment, altogether forgetting the lapse of time that had taken place.

She, however, expressed great delight at seeing her.

Monsieur Clarke carried Mr. Eastwood off to his own snuggery, somewhere in the house, leaving the ladies alone.

As soon as the two gentlemen had left the room, Mrs. Eastwood commenced a conversation which she intended would lead her to find out the exact state of the matter that had brought her husband to Paris, with herself and daughter. She began by saying :

“ I suppose, now, Mamie, you could not entertain the idea for a moment of again residing in London, although you lived there four years.”

They had been accustomed to call each other by their Christian names when they were neighbors in London.

The two ladies had really been quite friendly, and they now began to address each other after the old style.

“ I should not mind it at all, Florence,” replied Madame Clarke. “ I was very happy there, Samuel being very fond of me ; but you know I was born here, and, of course, have a great liking for the place of my birth.”

“ That is true, Mamie ; but where is Louis ? I have not yet seen him. He must be a bearded man by this time. Let me see ; he will be almost thirty years old, and must be quite ready to marry by this time.”

“ Yes,” replied she, “ he will soon be married, now.”

She had seen through her old friend’s motive from the first, and was determined to let her see that now

as well as formerly she was averse to Louis marrying her daughter.

She loved Helen with a mother's love, and would be true to her. So she repeated :

" Yes, he will soon be married to a Parisian lady of my acquaintance whom I love dearly."

Then she added playfully : " I remember, Florence, that there was some sort of an engagement between Samuel, my husband, and yours, that Louis should marry your sweet little Princess."

And as she said this, looked at that young lady, who sat indifferently by listening to their conversation.

" But that," she continued, " has been forgotten long ago. Princess having grown to be so lovely must have already chosen her future husband from among her many admirers."

Princess laughed and replied :

She had never thought of marrying anyone, had rejected many proposals for her hand, and was still pestered by a certain young gentleman in London.

But she would only marry the man of her heart, and even then not without her parents' consent.

Her mother looked lovingly at her, and applauded her devotion. Madame Clarke said she was sure that Princess would select a husband worthy of her, and one who would love her as she deserved.

The gentlemen here returned to the parlor.

Madame offered the party refreshments, but they refused, saying that they had breakfasted before leaving the hotel. Madame then invited them to dine on the following day. They accepted, and after expressing great pleasure in the manner they had been entertained, took their departure, returning to the Hotel Mirebeau.



CHAPTER XXI.

WHEN Mr. John Eastwood and family had left London, the house was left in charge of the servants with instructions to keep everything in good order.

This had been done. Sarah Tomkins not permitting the other servants to be neglectful.

The family had many callers among whom was a certain young gentleman, Mr. George Hastings. He came of respectable parents. His father was doing a good business in leather, somewhere in the "East End." He was sincerely devoted to Miss Eastwood.

She did not really love him but was glad to see him when he came to visit them.

He was a brilliant young gentleman quite accomplished in the varied pursuits that are approved by the initiated to be part and parcel of a man about town.

He had been visiting at the Eastwood's for a period of about ten or eleven months, but had made no perceptible progress in Miss Eastwood's affections, as far as he could discover.

He was sanguine however, and would not give up. He knew she had no other lover, having rejected them all as fast as they had proposed. He was assuredly good looking and was about twenty-five years old.

On the day of the departure of the family for Paris, he had called at his usual hour, three o'clock.

He was met at the door by Miss Sarah Tomkins who informed him the family had that day left for Paris and would not be back for some weeks. She said they had left quite unexpectedly and that was all she could tell him ; adding their address—Hotel Mirebeau.

He thereupon determined to go to Paris on the following day, so bowing to Miss Tomkins took his departure.

He could not accomplish his plan for a whole week however, being detained in London by his father. On the following week he was able to get away and lost no time in transporting himself to Paris. But he did not arrive there until Princess had recovered from her severe illness.

One evening about eight o'clock he made his appearance at the hotel, and after inquiring of the clerk the number of their room he presented himself.

It was on the very evening they had dined at the Clarke's and had only returned to the hotel a few minutes before.

He apologized for disturbing them at so late an hour ; told them he had just arrived and was going to register at the same hotel. So thought he would pay his respects before retiring for the night.

He here looked imploringly at Miss Eastwood who understood him perfectly well but held her head down and would not look at him.

Mistress Eastwood pointed to the sofa and told him to sit down and make himself at home as he used to do in London. He thanked her and sat down, Miss Eastwood sat at the other end of the sofa and Mr. and Mrs. Eastwood selected chairs.

"Well," said the head of the family, "tell me what has brought you to Paris ? Is it business ?"

"No," replied he, "I just ran over to spend a day or two and to rest a little. I have been working pretty hard lately."

Which was true enough. He had been kept busy by his father at home.

But he might have rested in London just as well.

The reader knows—and Mr. and Mrs. Eastwood knew, and no one knew better than Miss Princess Eastwood herself, and so when he said he came to Paris to rest she looked archly at him and smiled.

He smiled back at her and asked why she had run away from London, leaving all her friends disconsolate at her absence.

"Why, Mr. Hasting," said she, "my friends need not be alarmed on my account. I am not going to remain away forever. We are going to return to London in less than a month."

"Yes," said Mr. Eastwood, "We will have had enough of Paris by that time and shall be glad to get back."

Mrs. Eastwood inquired about his parents and he told her they were quite well. It was now very late and he arose asking permission to call on the next day, then took his leave, went to his room and to bed.

The next morning at ten o'clock he made his way to the apartments occupied by Mr. Eastwood and his family.

He was graciously received by Miss Princess herself. She said that her father and mother were not yet down but would be soon.

Princess took a seat on the sofa and invited him to sit down by her side, which he joyfully did.

Then she asked him if he was entirely rested from the effects of his passage in the steamer and subsequent trip on the train.

He replied that he was. Then she asked him to tell her what he had thought when he called at their house in London and found they were not there.

He replied that he had been keenly disappointed and had awakened to the fact that he must follow them immediately, or he would have no peace.

That he had been detained by his father; had suffered tortures in consequence, and it was not until he had seen *her*, that he had regained his wonted composure of mind.

Princess blushed at the conclusion of this flattering speech and said coquettishly, "Well, Mr. Hastings, what have I to do with the tranquillity of your mind? You can conduct yourself without my assistance, I trust."

"Oh! Miss Eastwood, you *know* that I am your devoted slave, and live only in your presence. Will you be always thus toward me? Do you then doubt my love for you? I have repeatedly assured you of my undying devotion. Do you not believe me? Tell me! Speak to me! Look at me, Princess, and say something to relieve my present misery."

He knelt at her feet as she sat there with bowed head, looking from him. He had ventured to take her hand and she had not resisted. He pleaded earnestly and lovingly for one look. One little token, that she was not vexed with him.

She at last yielded to his pleading and blushingly asked what he wanted her to do.

This was not the first time George Hastings had been at the feet of Princess Eastwood. But he had never pleaded so earnestly before.

He had never put his entire heart in his words as he had just done.

Princess felt her heart beat strangely quick. She

had a feeling such as she had never experienced before and knew that she had found her fate at last.

That the man who was then holding her hand in his own warm clasp was her heart's lord and she could never love another. Never again feel as she was feeling now.

When she looked at him and asked what he wished he saw the change in her beautiful face. And where he had before seen indifference, he now saw love. And for answer to his question, he clasped her to his bosom and kissed her lips, eyes and hair.

She lay passively in his arms and gazed up at him. Then suddenly darted from his embrace, panting like a hunted deer. She told him that he had done wrong to kiss her in that manner and that she would go upstairs and send her parents to him.

He wished her to stay with him and talk about their new love but she would not.

Princess was ashamed, and wanted to go away and be alone. So she resisted his entreaties and fled from the room leaving him there very happy.

He had at last won the girl he loved.





CHAPTER XXII.

HELEN returned to her home, and her old friend and companion, Ninette,—who was heartily glad to see her again.

She told Ninette that she had been happy at Madame Clarke's, but had always wished herself back with her, and the garden.

“And now,” she said, “I have come back, and will never leave you again. I have much to tell you, but I am going to Monsieur St. Armand, first.”

Helen went to the good Abbe and told him everything that had happened since she saw him last.

She told him she had been happy at Madame's.—That she had been there a whole week before Louis had come to the house; that she had made inquiries about him from his mother, through gratitude.

That he had asked his mother about her, and begged her to allow him to come to the house. He had arrived there when she was not in the room. That his mother knowing of his arrival, did not warn her of the fact, but had suffered her to be surprised by him. And she had been so overcome and alarmed that she had betrayed herself.

And he now knew, what he did not know before that fatal meeting, and she was ashamed to meet him now at all.

That he had kissed her hand, and his mother had

called her her daughter, and had asked her to marry Monsieur Louis.

Helen told Monsieur le Abbe that she loved him with her whole heart and would like to do what was maidenly and right. And begged him to give her his advice.

Monsieur le Abbe replied to this confession.

"He was very sorry she had permitted this youth to find out her secret. But forgave and told her not to be unhappy — that all would be well.

He said that he held himself responsible for her welfare, — before Heaven.

And no one should take advantage of her through her heart.

He asked her to give him the address of Louis' present abode.

She told him she did not know the number of the house, but that he had been stopping in the Rue Poissionerri, with his friend Jules Bertram.

But that now he would return home to his parents in the Faubourg St. Honore.

Monsieur le Abbe then gave her his benediction, and she left the church, and returned home to Ninette.

Helen had been in the house but a short time, when she called Ninette, sat down at her feet, and took the old lady's hand in hers for a moment.

Then relinquished it, only to kneel down and put her arms around her neck, and burst into a flood of tears and sobs.

Her slight frame shook, and trembled to such a degree, that Ninette was afraid she was suffering, and asked her if she was in pain.

She shook her head and continued to weep and sob.

The braids of her hair had become unbound, and fell, completely enveloping her.

Old Ninette knew that it was best to let her cry, because it would do her good.

And so it proved. Her sobs gradually became less frequent, and at last she ceased weeping altogether.

Then drying her eyes, she parted the hair from her face which was red from weeping, and looked up into the face of old Ninette, with a happy smile upon her lips.

Helen said she had wanted to cry the whole morning, for very joy, but did not wish anyone but her to see.

“But, tell me, my pet, what have you been crying so much about? To judge by your face you must be very happy. Tell old Ninette what it is that pleases you so much.”

And Helen told her all. How she betrayed herself; her passion with Louis’ mother: the conversation with them in the parlor,—in short everything she could remember,—and ended by saying she was the happiest girl in Paris.

“But,” said Ninette, “will you marry him?”

She buried her face in her hands and answered “Yes.”

Ninette advised her to invite Louis and his mother to call and see her, at her home. This she would not consent to, at first. But finally said she would, after Monsieur le Abbe had seen Louis.

Then she got up, bathed her face, and combed her hair; coiling it on the top of her little head, fastening it with a silver pin,—a present from her mother.

Then smiling at Ninette told her she was going to write to Madame St. Claire, and her friend Cora.

Cora Dubois explained to her mother, that the letter she had received was from Helen, asking her to come to her home in the evening, after she had dismissed the girls.

It was about nine o'clock before she left to go to her friend. She intended to remain there until morning, so told her mother not to expect her again that night, as she would stay with Helen.

She put on her bonnet and cloak, and left the house.

She took a fiacre around the corner of the Rue Dunkirk and the Faubourg St. Denis, and drove to her friend,—arriving there in a quarter of an hour.

Cora found Helen awaiting her. She had sent Ninette to bed some time ago. And was ready to impart to her friend all her joys,—and what she intended to do.

After inquiring how her dresses were getting along, and hoping that her mother, brother, and lover were well—not forgetting the girls, she proceeded to relate all that had happened up to the present evening. Telling her many things she did not know before.

She told her Louis had been out late one evening with Jules. That he did not get home until three o'clock in the morning. And had interfered in a brawl between two young Englishmen, in a café, in the Boulevard des Italiens.

She said the waiter who had attended to the wants of the belligerent gentlemen, was a brother of Pauline Deschamps, one of Madame St. Claire's girls. And further informed Cora, that she had heard from one of the girls, about the infatuation

of Jules Bertram, for Mademoiselle Sabine de Artice. And closed by saying she intended to invite Louis and his mother to dinner, as soon as she had permission from Monsieur le Abbe St. Armand.

Cora listened to her friend with great attention and pleasure.

Then asked her if she would not now condescend to treat Louis a little kinder.

Helen answered that she had never been really unkind to him ; but would not permit him to speak words of love or praise until she was sure of her position. And was not going to be even now, over maidenly in her behavior toward him.

She said that Monsieur le Abbe was her guardian and adviser, and she would do as he told her — trusting, and allowing herself to be led by him.

“Now,” said Cora, “you will be married soon, I think. There is nothing to hinder, after Monsieur le Abbe has seen every thing right.”

“Oh! no;” said she, “I am going to have my engagement the same as any other girl. There is lots of pleasure in being engaged, — don’t you find it so ?” said Helen.

Cora replied, “The lady then commanded, and the gentleman was proud to obey, — but that after they were married, the order of things would be reversed.”

Helen laughed and said she would have no fear.

“Louis,” she said, “would obey her slightest wish, and respect her slightest word; through his love for her. — And, after we have stood at the altar together, we will then trust in God to direct us right, and to keep our hearts in perfect concord — ”

“Amen, to that prayer,” replied Cora.

The girls talked a little while longer ; then became sleepy and retired for the night. — Helen and Cora sleeping in the same bed.

On the following morning they took breakfast together, and Helen accompanied by her friend, left the house. Helen to go to Madame St. Claire's and Cora to return to her home in the Rue Dunkirk.





CHAPTER XXIII.

MR. Glenham had received another visit from Louis and Jules. He told them he was going to leave Paris for London, during the following week, and that he would be happy to see them in Yorkshire, if they should ever visit England.

Mrs. Glenham reiterated her husband's invitation, — supplemented with one to their sweethearts. They then shook hands all round, and parted in excellent friendship.

Mr. Glenham, true to his word, took the train for Calais — a few days later, having heard nothing more from Lord Upham.

That gentleman knew that he had been in the wrong and apart from his willingness to keep the matter as private as possible, he had a great respect for Mr. Glenham personally, therefore he concluded to let the matter drop.

Jules had been constant in his attention to Mademoiselle Sabine, rarely letting pass an opportunity of seeing her. And the young lady herself, was equally pleased to meet him.

He had asked her permission to speak to her father, and she had blushingly consented. He intended therefore to embrace the first opportunity that should present itself.

On the day that her father had questioned her, in regard to her feeling for Jules, she told him that she liked him, and spoke in so decided a manner, that her father had easily understood, and as the reader is aware, was prepared to receive a visit from Jules on the subject. He loved his daughter dearly, and did not wish to part with her. But if in leaving her parents' home, she was going to that of a loving husband, he would be perfectly contented and happy.

The opportunity was not long in presenting itself to Jules. He met Monsieur de Artice on the following day, and after stating his pecuniary prospects, in a business-like manner; asked him for his daughter's hand in marriage.

Monsieur de Artice replied by asking him if he was sure he loved his daughter sufficiently well to make her his wife. "For," said he, "I would like to be certain of *that* point, before I give her to you."

Jules replied, "that he was perfectly sure he loved Mademoiselle Sabine,—That he knew his heart thoroughly, and was not deceiving himself at all. That he had contemplated matrimony for some time, and on the night when he first had the honor of seeing Mademoiselle Sabine, had immediately arrived at the conclusion, that he would endeavor to win her for his wife." And ended by hoping that Monsieur de Artice, would look favorably upon him as his son-in-law.

Monsieur smiled suavely, and said:

"Well, well, Jules my son, you have my consent, and that of her mother also,—through me. But remember one thing, she is too young to marry yet. A year or so can make no material difference, therefore take my advice, and don't hurry her."

Jules replied "that he would not."

Monsieur then left — after telling him to be sure that he called upon them in the evening.

Jules went on his way rejoicing. He was sure of Sabine's love, and felt no fear for the future. He remembered that he had not yet answered his sister's letter, and resolved that he would do so that very evening. He was alone again, and would have plenty of time, after he had returned from calling on his sweetheart.

Louis Clarke was to return home again to occupy his old room. He saw his mother and she acquainted him with the conversation she had with Helen, after he had left the house. She related *everything* — just as it took place. She told him Helen had returned to her home on the following morning in consequence. Of the unexpected arrival of the Eastwoods, in Paris. — The invitation they had received from his father, — unknown to her, and that she had promised to receive them courteously, and not to forget that they had been friends in London. That she had told his father of her intention in regard to his marriage with Helen, and he had objected saying, that he (Louis) should marry Miss Eastwood, to which she had replied by a vigorous disapproval.

Louis then inquired of his mother what she thought he had better do under the circumstances. If she thought he had better call on Mademoiselle Duval at her home or not.

"No," answered his mother, "you must not do that without her permission. You will displease her. Await the issue. She will now be guided by her heart. She will yearn after you. Will be

thinking of you, and will herself take steps that will crown you with happiness. Louis that is my advice to you, follow it my son, and I predict a speedy consummation of your cherished desire."

Louis listened to his mother's wise reasoning, with respect and admiration, and promised to follow her directions ; telling her to expect him that night.

She kissed him and told him not to forget her counsel, then suffered him to depart.

That afternoon when he left his office, he went straight to the Rue Poissonerre, and told his friend Jules, that he was going to return home. — Helen having concluded her visit at his mother's. But that they would be together as much as ever, the only difference being that he would sleep at home, instead of with him. He remained a long time, then left and went home.

Cora returned home, parting with her friend at the junction of the Faubourg St. Denis and the Rue Dunkirk. It was quite early, about nine o'clock ; none of the girls had as yet arrived, so she had plenty of time to speak with her mother about different subjects, chiefly about her own approaching wedding. She therefore coaxingly inquired of her, if she had found in Victor St. Mar, all the attributes she expected in a son-in-law.

"Do you, mother, find him agreeable to you? Has he ever, by word or gesture offended you? Have you ever had cause to doubt his ability, or his inclination to make me happy? If dear mother," she said, "with your superior knowledge, and foresight, have discovered anything, that would be likely to cause your daughter sorrow and

unhappiness, I ask you to tell me of it. Then you can hold yourself blameless, if I after knowing of any fault in him should still persist in taking him as my husband."

"My dear child," said her mother, "I have listened to you with pleasure. You have always been a loving and dutiful daughter, and I return thanks to God. No, I have never noticed anything in Victor that was unbecoming. He has always been respectful and attentive to me. I have watched him when in your company, to see if I could find ought in his behavior toward the woman he wished to make his wife,—anything no matter how trivial,—to cause me apprehension for your future happiness. But he has always been the same,—respectful and tender. Therefore I do not hesitate to say, that in marrying Victor St. Mar you will obtain the mutual happiness that is so essential to persons entering a married life."

The girls began to arrive and Cora thanking her mother, promised to be always dutiful. She kissed her and went to give the girls each their special piece of work as they entered, and took their various seats about the room.

On the third day after Helen's return to her home from Madame Clarke's, that lady received a letter addressed to her son. She did not know the handwriting, and wondered a little who could have written it. She however laid it by until he should return from the office.

When he came in, about seven o'clock in the evening, she handed him the letter, and watched him break the seal and read it. He read for a second, then a look of surprise came over his face, which was quickly followed by one of pleasure, and gratification. On completing the letter, he jumped

up, seized his mother, threw his arms around her and kissed her on both cheeks. Then led her to a chair, and picking up the letter, which had fallen to the floor during the exuberance of his joy, handed it to her with the remark :

“ There mother mine, it is all made clear at last, and I have only to be patient, and I shall possess the fairest, dearest, little wife in Paris.”

His mother took the letter, and read it. She also exhibited great pleasure in the perusal, then returning it to Louis, asked, “ what he was going to do.”

The letter was from Monsieur le Abbe St. Armand. He had written to Louis requesting an interview.

The letter ran thus :

OUR LADY OF MERCY

Paris, Aug. 21, '74.

MONSIEUR LOUIS CLARKE :

I hope to see you here to-day, to consult with you. I have heard about you, and desire to meet you.

On receipt of this letter, I beg you will call to see me. By so doing you will considerably advance your suit, with the lady known to you as Mademoiselle Helen Duval.

Respectfully,

ANTONE ST. ARMAND.

“ What am I going to do ? ” Louis replied, “ I am going to see him at once, of course. I shall make some alteration in my dress, then go and hear what he has to say. Mother,” said he, “ can’t you guess what he wants ? ”

“ Certainly,” said she, and her eyes twinkled with joy and gladness.

“ I know very well what he wishes to see you about. But you need not fear. He will not be

angry, and excommunicate you for your heinous offences against Mademoiselle Duval, his ward."

Louis laughed, and said, he "hoped not." He then left the room, and went upstairs to change his clothes. Louis on returning to the room found his mother still there. He told her he was ready. She wished him "good luck" and then he departed.

Madame went in search of her husband. She found him in his own private room, brushing his hat preparatory to going to the Hotel Mirebeau, to see his old friend Eastwood.—She told him not to be in a hurry, that she wished to speak to him.

She first asked, if he had said anything about that childish engagement between the two young people.

He replied that he had not done so.

Then she asked him if to his knowledge Louis had yet seen Miss Eastwood.

He replied that he was perfectly sure he had not.

"Well, well, Samuel, what do you think of this? You remember when in London, I told you it was a stupid thing to do; to engage two children as they were at that time. You remember my words don't you? Myself and Florence being women, felt the uselessness of such a thing, and we gave ourselves no further trouble about the matter. But you two men have always thought of it, and yet never took pains to bring them together as they grew up."

"You are right Mamie, we are much to blame for that. Had we brought them together they might have loved each other. I thought of my rights as a father, to compel Louis to obey me, but I have changed my mind. My friend and myself have agreed to let matters remain as they are.

Now especially since one of Miss Eastwood's admirers has followed her here from London."

Madame smiled when her husband spoke of his authority as a father, in connection with Louis and Helen. She knew that nothing in the world would part them, now that they had mutually confessed their love, and felt amused to hear her husband speak in that style, but as she did not wish to irritate him merely replied:

"And who is this lover that has come all the way from London to carry on his courtship with Princess, what is his name?"

"I do not know, I am sure," he replied. "I was going there for a few moments to see John, but think I won't go now. Let us go to-morrow and take Louis with us, you know they have not yet met and no harm can follow."

"Very well," said Madame, "we will call on them to-morrow evening, when Louis returns from the office. We shall then see how they will conduct themselves."

And after a pause, she suddenly said :

"Are you satisfied to take Helen for our daughter? It will give me much relief to hear you say so.—This time I want you to be sincere, Samuel; and do not try to deceive me as you have done before,—are you satisfied?"

He looked away from her and cogitated a moment, then he replied.

"Mamie, I will not conceal from you, that I had made up my mind, that Louis and Princess should marry, and have been greatly disappointed in seeing you, my wife, take sides against me. But I am not bigoted, if I am an Englishman, and can, and always will appreciate merit in man or woman. I therefore without the slightest hesitation, concede to Mademoiselle Duval her due, and say that I

consider her a virtuous, modest and ladylike woman, and that, in the face of her being the principal cause of my disappointment."

Madame replied, "She was extremely sorry that her husband was disappointed," and asked:

"What then is your objection? Is it because she is a French woman, that you cannot bear the idea of her marrying Louis? Have you forgotten that I am one also? Have you ever had cause to regret marrying me, on that account? There must be some reason for your non-approval?"

"No, Mamie, none. But just as I have told you, I had wished it. But rest assured, I am perfectly satisfied, and she will receive a father's blessing from me. Have they met since she has left here?"

"No," said she, "they have not. But they will meet before many hours have passed."

And her words literally came true.

On the following morning Madame received an invitation to call on Helen and to bring her husband and Louis.





CHAPTER XXIV.

JULES Bertram was formally engaged to Mademoiselle de Artice. He had called on the evening of the day he had met her father. On his arrival, she met him at the door, graciously informing him that she was alone; her father and mother having gone to visit Monsieur Rolan at his new home a few doors away.

Jules expressed regret at not seeing them, but added, — “I am very happy to be able to speak to Mademoiselle alone.”

She asked him if what he had to say could not be postponed until an occasion when her parents were at home.

Jules said he had the permission of her parents to address her on the subject, and added:

“It was of vital importance to him to receive her answer as soon as possible.”

Sabine then inquired timidly, if he thought he was acting right in surprising her in that manner.

She had no doubt her father had said that she would be happy at all times to see him.

“And so I am,” she added archly — and then told him to make the most of his opportunity, as he would never again catch her in the house alone.”

Now all this was very well and proper, but

the truth of the matter is, she knew perfectly well what was coming and tried to evade it.

Sabine was not angry when expressing herself in this way, and Jules would have been a fool to have taken her at her word. Jules was not a fool. And therefore reiterated his intentions.

He wanted her to answer him at once. Sabine seeing that he was so determined and that she could not deceive him, hauled down her colors and gracefully surrendered ; allowing Jules to tell her what she was perfectly happy to hear.

Jules told her that he had loved her ever since the night they had first met—and had become on each subsequent visit more and more infatuated, then taking her hand, he in a manly voice asked her to become his wife.

Sabine listened blushingly to Jules' avowal of love,—and when he had finished turned her head towards him,—she had been looking in an opposite direction to avoid his ardent gaze,—and candidly avowed she liked him exceedingly and would be happy to become his wife, subject however, to her parents' unqualified approval. She then became disquieted and wished to be alone.

Jules seeing her agitation and not wishing to forfeit her good opinion, arose, kissed her hand, and took his leave.

The Commissaire of police for the department of the Seine, was sitting in his private office one morning, about ten o'clock, when the door was opened and an officer connected with the force entered and presented him with a letter. He received it quietly, and the officer retired again. The letter ran:

LYONS, Aug. 15, 1874.

Mons. le Commissaire de police, — department
of the Seine,

The writer will be obliged if Monsieur will inquire
of the whereabouts of a young lady living in Paris, by
name, Hida Mamie Duval. She has relations in this
city of whom she is not aware. — I hope that you will
institute the necessary inquiries immediately on receipt
of this, and forward answer to

Mademoiselle Bertha Valendieu,
No. 26, Rue Petite Jean,
Lyons

Mons. le Commissaire struck a bell that stood
on the table before him, and the officer who had
brought the letter immediately appeared.

The commissaire said to him :

“ Lovat, has Mons. Augustine come in yet ? ”

“ No, Mons., ” replied he.

“ Will you go and find him, and bring him here
as soon as possible ? ”

“ Oui Mons. Capitaine. ”

“ Then do so at once, ” said Monsn. le Commissari
“ I shall await your return, be quick. ”

Lovat went in search of the officer of whom the
inspector of police had inquired.

He shortly returned, accompanied by Monsieur
Augustine. They entered the office of the chief of
police, who arose and came to them, motioning
Lovat to retire by a wave of the hand, — which
that gentleman immediately did.

“ Mons. Augustine favor me with your perusal of
this letter, ” said he.

Mons. Augustine read and then returned it to the
inspector with a bow.

Mons. le Commissaire said :

“ I wish to know the abode of that young lady
before five o’clock, Mons., it is now eleven. You

will have ample time in which to operate. Find out all you can, and report to me."

He bowed slightly to the officer and returned to his writing.

To the uninitiated, this would appear an impossible task, but to a French officer of the police,—mere child's play—especially so to Mons. Augustine, who was retained by the chief for just such cases.

He therefore began by going to a large official book, that stood on a desk by itself. This book contained the names of all the families who had lived in that arrondissement for the last twenty-five years. The rest was easy, and long before the time appointed by Mons. le Commissaire had expired, Mons. Augustine returned with a full and complete history of the young lady mentioned in the letter.

Mons. Godefroi Duval and his wife had come from Lyons twenty-two years before. He had taken a house somewhere in that very arrondissement; had lived there for several years, but at the time of the siege they were living in the Park Moncieu. Mons. Duval had taken part in that event, in which he had received injuries that had caused his death, three months later.

His wife grieved so much that it had broken her health in consequence, she had survived him just one year, then died, leaving an only daughter, a young lady as far as he could ascertain, about nineteen or twenty years of age. Her mother had left her a little ready money, and a small cottage; somewhere in the neighborhood of Pere La Chaise.

She was a remarkably handsome young lady,—Mons. Augustine could testify on oath to that having seen her with his own eyes about one hour

previous. A dressmaker by profession. At present she was the forewoman at Madame St. Claire's in the Rue Henri Quatre. She was loved by a gentleman whose name was Louis Clarke, but no one knew whether she returned his love or not. That she went to the chapel — Our Lady of Mercy — near her home. The officiating priest's name was Antone St. Armand, and that said priest was her guardian and confessor and a very respectable gentleman.

He concluded by hoping that Monsieur le Commissaire was satisfied with the way in which he had conducted the inquiries.

Mons. le Commissaire replied "that he had conducted the investigation in a perfectly satisfactory manner" thanked, and dismissed him.

Monsieur le chief of police then wrote to Mademoiselle Bertha Valendieu that he had found the young lady. Sending her a brief statement of the method employed by his subordinate, and ending his letter by saying:

"That should the inquirer come to Paris to repair to him at the prefecture of police — department of the Seine — and she would receive further information in regard to the matter."





CHAPTER XXV.

THE reader will remember that Louis had received a summons from the Abbe St. Armand. He had answered the summons immediately upon its receipt arriving at the chapel about half-past eight o'clock.

Louis was conducted to the sacristy and found Mons. le Abbe waiting. He entered and Mons. St. Armand arose to receive him.

Monsieur le Abbe was about fifty-five or sixty years old, of a benevolent appearance, with clear gray eyes, a smooth shaven face and was inclined to stoutness.

As Louis entered the room he saw before him, the gentleman who had written, that by coming to speak with him he would advance himself in his suit with Helen. — He made up his mind therefore to listen to what the Abbe had to say with the profoundest attention. Mons. le Abbe began by saying :

“ I sent for you Monsieur Louis, to speak to you in regard to my ward, Mademoiselle Helen Duval. I have heard from various sources, that you have presumed to fall in love with her. Now Monsieur Louis, you must understand that she will obey me in this matter implicitly, knowing me from her childhood. On the death-bed of her excellent mother she placed her in my care and protection. She is an orphan, but her mother told me, that she, — her mother — had a sister in Lyons.

I have not told Helen of this aunt, because I promised her mother not to do so. She may be alive, I do not know. I have never made inquiries about her. I promised Helen's mother not to lose sight of her daughter. And I have kept my word religiously. I have never swerved, never been neglectful.

"Therefore on hearing of your love for her, I sent for you, that I might hear from your own lips,—being her guardian as I have told you—if you are acting with truth and sincerity."

Louis had been listening to Mons. le Abbe with the greatest attention, and when he had concluded his speech replied as follows :

"Monsieur, I thank you for the honor you have conferred upon me, and will endeavor to show that I am not unworthy of your confidence. You wished to hear from my own lips, if I am sincere in my love for your ward — Mademoiselle Helen Duval. Listen to me for a moment Mons., and satisfy yourself of my respect and devotion for her, and as I speak truly or falsely, let God who rules the universe be my judge."

Mons. le Abbe bowed his head — Louis at the word God had likewise done so, — and said:

"Let Him guide you my son, and you will not err."

Louis proceeded. "I had been introduced to Mademoiselle by a friend, Mons. Jules Bertram.— She was then about sixteen years old, modest and retiring, this was before the death of her parents. The introduction was very simple — 'Monsieur Louis, Mademoiselle Duval,' nothing more, and she seemed frightened even at those few words. I remember that I trembled and could scarcely utter a word. I remained in the room for some time,

but we said nothing to each other. On my departure from the room,—which happened before she left,—I felt curiously, as if I had lost something. I did not know what. I had never felt that way before. She lived in the Park Moncieu, and that night I left my home to try and get a glimpse of her, she had been in my thoughts all day. We had been introduced about ten o'clock in the morning, and during the remainder of the day I was restless. There had been a complete change in me. Previous to this I had never seen her, her parents and mine were unknown to each other. We had no previous knowledge of each other in the slightest degree. I lived a good distance from the Park, yet I was determined to see her again that night. I started to go to the Park to see her, on arriving there I did not go to my friend's house but remained outside, trying to get a glimpse of her face, at a window, a door or anywhere but to no purpose. I did not see her any more that night, and returned home late, for the first time in my life."

Mons. le Abbe had been listening to all this with a smile upon his face, but saying nothing. Louis resumed:

"I did not see her again for a week, then she appeared at a window one afternoon, like a vision. And I knew that a mere child had possession of my heart.

"Then came her mother's death. And she went to live in the cottage that she now occupies.

"I had tried every means in my power to get on loving terms with her, but to no avail. She knew that I loved her, but was always cold and reserved toward me, and has never permitted me to make love to her. She has been spending the last few

days with my mother: whose acquaintance she made at Madame St. Claire's where she is a dress-maker. She returned to her own home yesterday morning, in consequence of meeting me unexpectedly in the house and I know it will be a long time before I shall see her again."

Monsieur le Abbe smiled good-naturedly, then said, "she has told me everything. I know all about the meeting, and what you must have found out; and that brings me to what I have to say to you. She has asked my advice, and wishes to know if she may invite you to call on her, I wanted to see you first and sound you. I believe you are sincere and truthful.

"You will receive an invitation to-morrow morning. But I warn you, Mons. Louis to deal fairly with her. Don't presume to trifle with her in the slightest degree; — for if you do you will bring on your head my everlasting curse. Now go Mons. Louis, and remember what I have said, Farewell."

He extended his hands toward Louis who bowed and left the sacristy, carrying with him a profound respect for Mons. le Abbe St. Armand.





CHAPTER XXVI.

THE reader will remember that Miss Princess Eastwood had left Mr. George Hastings in the parlor and escaped to her room. She entered, bolted the door and sat down, then began to recall the past few moments.

What had she done ? She had been brought to Paris, for the express purpose of meeting Louis Clarke, whom she had been told was to be her husband. And here inside of a few days, had permitted another man to speak love to her, and without having seen Louis. She had gone further still. Had avowed love for this other man unknown to her parents.

What was she to do ? What would her father think of her ? True he knew George Hastings had been paying his addresses to her in England, but she had told him that she was in love with no one. How then could she reconcile this strange act with her past assertion to her father.

What would he think of her ? Had she been unmaidenly in her conduct ?

Of all her suitors George Hastings had been the most persistent. He had made her look into her heart, and she had found there a responsive echo to his love.

She felt ashamed, and resolved to acquaint her parents forthwith. She left the room and went in search of them. They had not yet left

their own room, she asked permission to enter, which was granted.

Her parents were glad to see her, and asked what had made her visit them so early.

Mr. and Mrs. Eastwood were sitting on the sofa. They invited Princess to take a seat between them. She obeyed.

Princess then told them conjointly, — blushing all the while, — of her interview with George Hastings. She did not hide from them, that she had returned his love. But told them everything just as it had happened. Told them she had found her fate in George, and hoped they would not be angry with her for what she had done.

Then turning to her father, who was frowning, threw her arms around his neck, and weeping audibly, begged him to forget his intention of marrying her to Louis Clarke. Hoped she had not angered him past forgiveness, but that it was impossible for her to love Louis now that she had found the state of her feelings toward Mr. Hastings; and ended by entreating her mother to join her in obtaining his forgiveness.

She was now weeping and sobbing terribly.

Her father arose from the sofa and began to stride up and down the room in great perturbation: he finally stopped directly in front of her and asked:

“If she really and truly thought it was love for George Hastings that had actuated her, or if it was only a spirit of resistance to his wishes that had prompted her to this avowal.”

Princess looked reproachfully at him, then spoke firmly.

Had he ever, to the best of his recollection known her to wilfully oppose his wishes in any-

thing? Had she not always been a dutiful daughter to her parents?

When he had dismissed her admirers one after another, had she repined? shown by word or action that she was other than amendable to his wishes and commands? Why should he *now* accuse her of wilful disobedience? Was that doing justice to the child that loved him so dearly, and whom he had always said he loved in return?

"Father," she said, "You do me wrong. I appeal to dear mother, whether I have not always been a dutiful child and a sympathetic daughter?"

Her mother seeing that she was in great distress; arose from the sofa, and led her, still weeping, to the door; pausing long enough to say to her husband:

"John, I wish you to remain here until I return," then left the room taking Princess with her.

Mrs. Eastwood led her straight to her room and made her lie down. Princess was still weeping and her mother had great difficulty in quieting her, but succeeded at last.

She bathed her face with eau de cologne, and staid a few moments with her, then went back to her husband. She found him quieter and more tractable. She told him sharply that he had been unjust to Princess, as she had always been a most obedient child.

If she loved George Hastings he should not withhold his consent to their union. She always saw the inconvenience that would follow his determination to wed her to Louis Clarke, and ended by saying:

"It was not absolutely necessary to allow them to become engaged, but promise George to consider the matter on their arrival in London, and appease Princess by a like promise."

All this she said to him with great firmness and decision. He listened to her with the respect he had always shown her, and when she had finished said:

"Florence, you know very well I love Princess with a father's love, she being the only one remaining to us."

Mrs. Eastwood exhibited signs of disquietude and distress, and looked as though she would like to follow her daughter's example, and indulge in a good cry herself.

"And I love her dearly. I refused to let her marry any of those young whipper snappers, who had proposed for her in London, because I wanted to see her married to a man of sense. But if she loves George Hastings, and can be happy with him I shall interpose no objections, providing he takes himself off to London and waits until we get back there."

Princess had told her mother that Mr. Hastings was in the parlor. This fact Mrs. Eastwood now told her husband.

He bade her go and comfort Princess, and to carry her his forgiveness, while he went to the parlor to acquaint Mr. Hastings of his intentions.

His wife then left him and returned to Princess, whom she found still lying on the lounge in a state of expectancy, but otherwise perfectly calm.

Princess asked her if her father was still angry.

"No," answered she, "he sends you his love, and bids you content yourself, promising to let you marry George, or any other man you chose."

Princess kissed her mother and said "she was happy, and glad now that she was sure of her father's love again."

Mr. Eastwood found George Hastings in the parlor, and after asking him how he dared to entangle his daughter's affections, told him to pack up his traps and return home without trying to see Princess again, there to await his final answer.

Giving him hope however, by saying:

"That since he had been so lucky as to win Princess' love, he would not find her father unjust or unreasonable."

Mr. George Hastings took the train that same night for Calais, on his return to London. Leaving a letter for Mr. Eastwood, the contents being simply telling them of his departure and wishing them good-bye.





CHAPTER XXVII.

AT the conclusion of the twenty-fifth chapter, Madame Clarke had prognosticated that Louis and Helen should meet before many hours had passed, and her words came true. Louis had told her of his interview with Mons. le Abbe St Armand, she was rejoiced,—she saw the way clear for him at last,—he was going to receive his reward, and would be happy.

She bade him return home the following evening as soon as possible,—this he gladly promised.

It was now late and his mother wished to retire for the night, so she kissed him on the cheek, wished him good-night and left him. His father had been upstairs for some time. Louis felt in no mood to go out that night. On his way to the office in the morning he would stop and tell his friend Jules of his last stroke of good luck. And could be sure of receiving his congratulations, he therefore concluded to go to bed.

He sat down for a moment to reflect on the interview with Mons. le Abbe,—time had unconsciously flown, and he had been sitting there an hour, when he thought he heard a noise in the passage outside. Thinking that it was old Bertram coming to see him about something, he did not leave his seat. Then hearing a knock at the door he arose and opened it, and was confronted by the entrance of his father.

Monsieur Clarke closed the door softly and sat down, motioning to his son to do the same.

" You are no doubt surprised to see me here at this unusual hour, Louis ? I have waited for this moment, waited until your mother was sound asleep before I left the room, because I wished to have a serious conversation with you, on a very important matter.

" Are you listening to me, Louis ? "

" Yes father," he answered, " I am listening to you."

Louis knew what was coming, he knew what had brought his father from the side of his dear mother at that hour, purposely to speak with him. He had tried to avoid this,—had dodged him in every way, whenever he could do so without appearing rude. And had succeeded so far, but never expected this move on the part of his father.

Louis knew that he was going to upbraid and reproach him, for having slighted his wishes, in not seeking to further his views, in regard to his proposed union between himself and Miss Princess.

Mons. Clarke said, " Louis, I come to you to express my great annoyance, and keen disappointment at your not having participated in my desire, of marrying you to my friend's daughter. I knew that your beloved mother was against me, but thought you would have sufficiently respected an old man's wishes.

" You had heard me speak often of the matter, had heard me say that I intended you to marry Miss Eastwood.

" You have not on your part tried to assist me in any way. The evening that she dined here, you made it a point to be absent, instigated no doubt by your mother, who never liked the idea.

"I never expected that you would make violent love to her. She is not as beautiful as Mademoiselle Duval, but is a sweet, and virtuous young lady, and comes from a respectable family. Therefore I had a right to expect that you would have acted differently on her visit here.

"Has the love for one woman blinded you to the merits of all the rest of womankind? Do you suppose there is no other woman as virtuous, modest, sensible or as beautiful as Helen Duval?

"Do you suppose there are no women in England, possessing in a like degree the self-same attributes of which Mademoiselle Duval is by nature endowed? If that is a part of your feelings toward Miss Eastwood, and if you have been inoculated by your mother with any such ideas, I, as an Englishman, tell you that it is an insult to me; showing great disrespect for the parent who has always loved you, and likewise a want of common sense."

He had stopped and looked at Louis with an angry brow. He was for the moment angry with Louis, his wife, himself and everything around him.

He had been balked in his dearest wish, the pet scheme of his life, — by his own son, and the connivance and intriguing of his wife, — and was helpless.

He and his friend had made up their minds to accept the inevitable, but that made it none the less hard to bear. And in reproaching Louis, he thought it was his right to do so.

Louis had endeavored to interpose some remark in defense, but he had been checked by a peremptory gesture from his father, and had arisen from his chair and was standing quietly by, waiting until his father should give him a chance to speak.

Monsieur Clarke resumed his upbraidings.

"Have you ever consulted me as a dutiful son would have done, in regard to your marriage with Helen Duval ?

"No, all I have ever heard in regard to it, has been through your mother. Was it not your place to do so ? Certainly, but you did not think me worthy of your confidence. It was not necessary to get my consent, as long as you had your mother's. That was sufficient,—was enough, — and your poor old father, with his ancient crochets, and English prejudices, could comfort himself as best he might."

Mr. Clarke stopped at last, he had been standing by the side of his chair, with his hands in the pockets of his dressing gown, and when he had concluded his reproachful words, sat down again apparently in great distress.

Louis had listened to his father with close attention. He heard him through to the end, and when he stopped, and sat down in so dejected a manner, pitied him.

He had a very great respect for his father, always had. His father had been always kind to him, had been ever indulgent, and he was profoundly sorry that he had been the means of giving him pain, and felt deep regret for not having tried to please him.

Louis was determined therefore to say no word in reply, that would cause him additional pain.

So he answered him in a voice firm but respectful.

"Father," said he, "You have been unjust to me in this. You say I have not been considerate, or attentive to your wishes, that I thought

it unnecessary to consult you in regard to Helen Duval, that I was instigated thereto by mother.

"Now father, in this you do us both wrong, you have for a moment lost sight of your good nature and have for once spoken unjustly.

"You have especially wronged dear mother, who has always exacted from me, in reference to yourself the profoundest respect. She has never by word or deed said anything to me about you, that could be construed as contradictory to your interests, and you owe her an apology for having entertained such an idea."

He paused and looked hard at his father.

Mons. Clarke felt his gaze upon him, and looked up at Louis with a smile, then arose, extended his hand frankly, and said :

"Louis, you are a good son and a noble defender of your worthy mother," then resumed his seat.

Louis bowed and continued :

"Forgive me father, if I say you have acted injudiciously in this matter. You always have said it is true, that you intended me to marry Miss Eastwood, but have you ever taken any steps to further your own projects? Did you ever introduce us to each other while we were boy and girl,— and later when she had become a woman, and I a man, did you take any pains to bring us together? No, well, we are both young, and it was to be supposed that we would love and seek to marry, can you blame me?"

"I speak for myself not knowing whether Miss Eastwood has a lover or not.

"Had you come to me before I saw Helen, and insisted on my marrying Miss Eastwood, I would have obeyed you without much trouble, arguing

that once married, and — she being not absolutely hideous, — I would have learned to love her in time. But now it is impossible, not to be thought of for a second. There is not a spot in my heart where Helen Duval is not mistress. *She* can lay her hand on my heart without fear, and say to any other woman on the face of the navigable globe, ‘*This is mine*,’ and I will endorse her words with pleasure, with pride. Such is my love for Helen.’

He was striding up and down the room, with his hands behind him, passing and repassing. When suddenly the door was opened and his mother entered the room. Louis was astonished.

She went straight to her husband and laying her right hand on his shoulder said :

“ Samuel, I have just heard you speak slightly of me.

“ In all the years that we have been married, have I ever given you cause to do that ?”

Mons. Clarke was still sitting, and on the entrance of his wife was literally chained to the spot and could not have arisen if his life had depended on it, and when he felt her touch he shivered ; but that very touch was the means of arousing him. Then he sprang to his feet and gazed at her, inquiring what she was doing out of bed that hour of the night.

His wife answered:

That she had been awakened by hearing loud voices. Had listened and had been convinced they came from the direction of Louis’ room, had then left her bed, and came to the door, and listened, — for which act she implored their forgiveness, never having done such a thing before in all her life, — and had heard her husband speaking harshly.

She would have entered before, but wished to hear what her son would reply to his father's remarks.

She here took Louis' hand in both her little ones, and resumed,

"That at the first words he (Louis) had spoken, she knew she had a dear and loving son." Here she kissed him, "who would protect her even against his father."

She felt no anger against her husband at all, feeling sure he spoke from impulse, — not meaning to be disloyal to his own Mamie.

Here she left Louis' side, and went to her husband, and throwing her arms around his neck kissed him, — who had always been a true and loving wife to him, and would continue to be so, to the end of her natural life.

She ceased speaking and began to cry softly, telling her husband and son not to mind her, for she was only crying because she felt happy.

Louis laughed and said,

"There, there, father, she is every bit as much in love with you, as I am with Helen."

The old gentleman smiled and said,

"He thought so too."

Madame said she would return to bed, and take her husband with her, kissed Louis once more and left the room followed by her husband, he having first shaken hands with his son, in the most amicable manner possible.





CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE train from Lyons came thundering into the depot, the locomotive stopped panting, puffing and throbbing, and the passengers got out and went to their several places of destination.

Among the passengers was an old lady about fifty years of age, she was respectably well dressed, wore gold spectacles and carried a small satchel in her hand.

She went directly to the nearest cab stand, and after selecting the cleanest fiacre among twenty-five or thirty that stood in a row, got in and told the driver to take her as quickly as possible to the préfecture de police, — department of the Seine.

“Oui Madame,” he replied.

He gathered up his reins, whipped up his horse, and drove away.

In about fifteen minutes he stopped at the door, got down from his perch, and helped the old lady to alight, she told him to await her return, while she went in to make certain inquiries of Monsieur le Commissaire de Police.

At the door she met Lovat, who conducted her to the Chief of Police. She introduced herself as Mademoiselle Bertha Valandieu.

Told the Chief of Police, that she had just arrived from Lyons, and had come, agreeable to the answer she had received to her letter dated Aug. 15, — to

get further information respecting the whereabouts of Mademoiselle Hida Duval, she would be extremely obliged to Mons. le Commissaire for said information. Wishing to see her niece as soon as possible, and to take her to Lyons on her return.

Monsieur le Commissaire turned to the table and examined a large book filled with notes and references.

He returned and told her she might go to her hotel, and rest herself and in two hours' time she would receive a visit from the young lady she wished to find.

She bowed to him, he returned her bow with a deeper one, she then left the room, and he returned to his table.

The Commissaire struck the bell that stood before him, and was answered by Lovat.

“Send Mons. Augustine here, Lovat.”

“Oui Monsieur.”

Exit Lovat, enter Mons. Augustine.

“Mons. Augustine, take this note to Mademoiselle Duval in the Rue Henri Quatre and return as quickly as possible.”

Mons. Augustine departed on his mission. He found Helen and delivered the note, — she read it in his presence exhibiting great surprise.

Mons. Augustine bowed and retired. The note read in this style:

MADEMOISELLE DUVAL:

You will on receipt of this note go to the Hotel Mirebeau and inquire for Mademoiselle Bertha Valandieu. It is now about nine o'clock and you are expected to call at eleven.

Allowing ample time for unforeseen incidents, you will arrive there at that time. The lady is your aunt

whom you have never heard of, but who knows of your existence. Oblige me then by going as soon as possible,

Respectfully,
COMMISSAIRE DE POLICE,
Department of the Seine,
Paris.

Helen left the shop about half-past nine and took her way to the hotel Mirebeau. She inquired of the clerk the number of the room occupied by Mademoiselle Valandieu.

The clerk referred to the register and gave her the necessary information.

“No. 55, second floor.”

Helen thanked him and passed on up the stairs until she reached the second floor. There she saw a *femme de chambre*, and of her asked to be directed to No. 55.

The girl directed her, and passed on.

Helen found the number and knocked at the door.

The summons was promptly answered by an old lady who wore gold spectacles, and a neat black dress. She had in her hand a ball of worsted, of which she was knitting.

She spoke to Helen in a soft voice asking her to step in and take off her bonnet and veil. Helen complied. Then leading her to the nearest window, took a good look at her. Next inquired if she had ever heard her mother speak of a sister in Lyons. Helen answered :

“Never.” Then the old lady put one of her arms around Helen’s waist and embraced her, saying, she was her mother’s sister, and begged Helen to love her for her mother’s sake.

She sat down on the sofa and invited Helen to do the same, and began to stroke Helen's hair with her right hand, and with the left was taking something from her bosom. This proved to be a very small locket,—a miniature,—she stopped toying with Helen's hair and occupied both hands in opening the locket.

When it was open she showed it to Helen, who on seeing her dead mother's likeness, snatched it from the old lady's hand, looking long and lovingly at the dear face, she allowed the locket to fall from her hand, leaned back on the sofa, and burst into sobs and tears.

The old lady did not try to stop her niece's weeping for a moment or two, but continued to stroke her hair, calling her endearing names.

She finally thought Helen had cried sufficiently, and told her to stop, that it would make her head ache.

Helen stopped and looked at her aunt.—Whether she saw a resemblance to her mother, or whether it was the old lady's toying with her hair, or what, but she smiled pleasantly and cuddling closer threw her soft and yielding arms around her neck.

That same morning at ten o'clock Madame Clarke had received an invitation from Mademoiselle Duval, to call on her in the evening at six, and bring her husband and Louis with her.

Monsieur Clarke told his wife he would go to the office and tell Louis to come home at noon, so that he could go with them to the Hotel Mirebeau and remain an hour there.

They would return home and rest, then go to Helen's home and spend the rest of the evening.



CHAPTER XXIX.

HELEN and her aunt remained in each other's embrace for a short time.

Helen finally raising her head said smilingly, "Now, aunt please tell me something about my dear mother."

Her aunt smiling also consented.

She told Helen, that she was one of a family of three ; two sisters and a brother, their parents having died some years previously.

They had lived happily together until her sister met Monsieur Godefroi Duval, and they immediately fell in love with each other.

"Myself and brother, Julian tried to part them, but it was of no use ; they really loved.

"Your mother was the youngest, she was very obedient but would not give him up.

"She promised us never to meet Godefroi clandestinely, and never did, but said she would marry him. She was then about sixteen years old, and refused all offers of marriage from other young gentlemen, determining to keep her word and marry Godefroi.

"We told her, if she did we would never speak to her husband, or in any way acknowledge him.

"She replied that he would not mind that. Barbara—that was her name—kept her word, and when she was of age married Monsieur Godefroi Duval, shook hands with brother and myself and went to

Paris with her husband telling us until we acknowledged him she did not wish to hear from either of us.

"We never acknowledged him, but wrote often to her, and always received the same reply. 'Take my husband's hand, receive him as one of the family and you will have my love again.'

"If you do not, my children shall never know that they have relatives living besides their parents;" and she kept her word.

"She never mentioned us to you, her only daughter.

"Julian married a respectable young lady, and they lived together happily for three years, then he died.

"His wife followed him in six months, dying of grief and sadness, and leaving no children. Everything was left to me, being the only one remaining.

"I never heard of Barbara's death until a few days ago, and also that she had left a daughter, whose name was Hida. I concluded that you must be my sister Barbara's child.

"I wrote to the commissaire of police here, and shortly after received the intelligence that you were really her daughter.

"Then I packed a few things in a valise and came to Paris to find you, and to bring you home with me."

She finished her recital with a kiss and a smile to Helen, who was sitting with her hands in her lap, and her beautiful eyes brim full of tears.

Helen did not cry however, but wiping her eyes looked up at her aunt and said, "That she would love her for her mother's sake, whom she had never forgotten."

She gave her aunt a short review of her life since her mother's death, carefully omitting to tell her anything about Louis. And said that she would be

happy to return home with her, if by doing so she (her aunt) would derive any happiness therefrom.

And finished by saying that she was very sorry but Madame St. Claire expected her back as soon as possible, and she herself had to receive some friends in the evening. But on the following day would come and spend a long time with her, and talk about their future course of procedure.

Then kissing her aunt again told her to take good care of herself until they met, on the following day ; went down the stairs and returned to the Rue Henri Quatre.

She told Madame St. Claire all about her visit, and described her aunt's general appearance for the gratification of that lady, and asked her permission to go home at once, that she might make all needful preparations for the reception of her lover and his parents—she having told Madame of this invitation in the early part of the day.

Madame St. Claire gladly gave her consent; and Helen shortly left the shop in a fiacre and drove home. She then went to work assisting Ninette in preparing something recherche to offer her lover when he should pay her his *first* visit at her own house.

On that same day about half-past twelve Louis left the office and returned home.

This was going to be a rather trying day for him. First he had to go with his parents to the Hotel Mirebeau, there he would have to exert all his efforts, and to be on guard in his conversation with Miss Princess Eastwood, then return home and prepare himself for the most important event of the day,— his visit to Helen.

This he considered more in the light of a pleasant excursion however, than anything else. They were to go to the Hotel Mirebeau quite early in the day,

intending to arrive there about two o'clock,—leaving the Faubourg St. Honore about half-past one. They took a coupe and were driven to the hotel.

On arriving there they got out, Louis paying the driver, while Monsieur Clarke led the way up the stairs, followed by his wife and son.

Monsieur Clarke having been there before knew Mr. Eastwood's room perfectly well, and went directly to the door and knocked, the door was opened by his friend Eastwood.

He received them blandly and gallantly ushered them into the parlor adjoining.

His wife and daughter expressed their delight at seeing them. They were all known to each other except Princess and Louis. These two young persons were introduced in due form. Miss Eastwood bowed to Louis and gave him her hand.

Louis held it for a moment looking at her intently.

She was also gazing intently at him, finally they all sat down Louis sitting by Miss Eastwood on the sofa.

He saw beside him the lady who had been selected as his future wife, and he felt anxious to get better acquainted with her, that he might be able to form some idea of what sort of a person she was.

At a glance he saw that as far as outward appearances indicated she was not up to Helen's standard. She was shorter and stouter, had a vivacious look, and could flirt if she had the opportunity.

He mentally concluded his silent inspection thinking her on the whole a very handsome young lady, but not to be compared with Helen. Miss Eastwood was doing the self-same thing in regard to him.

He was sitting close to her, — the man for whom her father had rejected so many offers for her hand; this dark man who appeared so silent and reserved; — this gentleman who was watching her so closely, this was the man who had been chosen to be her husband ; but who had never made an attempt to see her until now.

She had been in Paris now almost three weeks, and he had never called on them before. This was the man whom she heard preferred a *French* girl to *her*, Princess Eastwood.

And who doubtless had come to laugh at her because he thought she was grieving for him.

She would show this impudent, scornful looking man, that he was mistaken in his estimate of her.

No one knew of George Hastings' love, but her parents.

She would try her hand at subjugating this man who had scorned her ; who had refused to obey his old father's wishes, and not tried to win her love.

She would *make* him love her, persuade her father to remain in Paris for a few weeks longer, for that purpose alone, and with smiles and winning ways bring him to her feet. And when she had done that would tell him that she was going to return to England to marry the man of her choice.

She would do all this for revenge, not through dislike to him personally, but because anger prompted her.

How dared he treat her so ?

Who was this Helen Duval, for whom he had slighted her ?

This she would find out, but not through him. She would not condescend to let him know that she was annoyed one way or the other.

He should take her to the theater, and opera, and he everywhere should be her escort, and would leave no stone unturned, until she had made him subject to her. Princess vowed to do all this, as she looked at him with the least possible bit of a smile upon her face.

Then she spoke and said :

“ Monsieur Clarke why have you not been here before ? I have been in Paris a long while and this is the first time that we have met You have been neglectful of me sir.”

“ I beg your pardon Miss Eastwood, for what appears to you to be neglect, but which I assure you is nothing of the sort. I have been extremely busy, and I pray you to forgive me.

“ Now, that we have met, I shall endeavor to gain your good opinion.”

“ Very well sir, I hope you will remember your words, and call to see me as often as you can, I shall then believe that you are really in earnest, and are anxious to be forgiven.”

“ There can be no doubt about that,” replied Louis, “ I sincerely wish to stand well in your good graces Miss Eastwood, and will endeavor by my future conduct to atone for my past delinquency.”

Miss Eastwood smiled, and said that it was not a hard matter to gain her indulgence.

“ My parents have often told me that we used to be playmates when we were children, do you remember anything about it Mr. Clarke ? ”

Louis replied that he had a dim recollection of a little girl child whom he used to carry about in his arms, when his parents lived in London many years ago.

She laughed a low wicked little laugh, and replied, “ I am that very child Mr. Clarke, I fancy you could not carry me around so easily now.”

Louis replied by a compliment. Miss Eastwood might be a few years older, but any one could see very well that she was still a child, and a remarkably handsome one.

Princess blushed, and the conversation became general.

Mrs. Eastwood was saying to Madame Clarke, "You remember Mamie how he used to kiss her, and call her his little wife?"

"Certainly Florence, I remember very well," replied Madame Clarke.

Monsieur Clarke said "yes, and we two men, their fathers promised them to each other, you remember John?"

"Yes," said Mister Eastwood, "and we were fools enough not to make them better acquainted as they grew up," and he sighed.

Louis and Princess here interchanged glances; then held their heads down.

Mrs. Eastwood knowing how matters stood with the young people, changed the conversation and proposed refreshments.

They all retired to partake of some lunch, and enjoy a few moments over a glass of sherry. Then returned to the parlor.

Madame Clarke had not forgotten her invitation from Helen, which was uppermost in her mind, and that of her son. They accordingly arose to take their leave.

Miss Eastwood receiving a promise from Louis that he would call and take her out for a walk, or to the theater every evening as long as they remained in Paris. They shook hands all around and parted, leaving Mr. Eastwood at the top of the stairs muttering. "It might have been, it might have been."



CHAPTER XXX.

IT was three o'clock when the Clarkes returned from their visit to the Eastwoods. They had enjoyed it very much.

Monsieur Clarke asked his son what he thought of Princess. Louis replied,

He thought her a very agreeable young lady, but was inclined to think her a bit of a coquet.

He said that he should take her out for a walk in the evenings, as long as she remained in Paris, excused himself and went upstairs to his room.

When he had gone, Monsieur Clarke said to his wife.

He was sure that if Louis had not met Helen Duval he would have loved Miss Eastwood.

He had treated her in a way that left no doubt in his mind about that, and also thought that Princess would have loved him, but it was too late now to think of any such thing Louis being irrevocably in love with Helen.

Madame said "that she thought quite differently, Louis would never have married Princess, she is not the sort of woman he would have loved. I watched them and am sure that he would never have chosen her as a wife."

"Well, well," said he in reply, "Louis has already chosen, and has made a wise selection."

"Of course," said Madame, "he will marry the dearest girl in the world, and what more do you expect?"

He did not reply in words but did in action ; he kissed her and left the room.

At five o'clock punctually they left the house to visit Helen.

Monsieur Clarke was smartly dressed and so was his wife. Louis looked resplendant. He was going to her whom he loved best of all created things ; what cared he for all the Princesses in the world, as long as Helen Duval loved him.

One smile, a touch, a look from her was of more importance than untold wealth. Bring all the riches of the entire universe on the one hand, and place Helen Duval, as he had seen her last in his mother's parlor, on the other, and then tell him to choose. He would unhesitatingly place himself at her feet, and declare to the world he had made his choice.

To-night he could look into her eyes, and be repaid for all the years that he had been loving her without recompense. He should make the attempt, the first one, of pressing her to say in words what his ears were so anxious to hear.

He felt proud and happy beyond expression. These were the thoughts that occupied Louis' mind.

His parents seemed to know by intuition what was going on in the mind of their son, and spoke no word to him during the whole of the way.

Helen was sitting alone in her parlor about this time thinking also of him.

Now that he was aware of her love there could be nothing wrong in receiving him. She had been told this by Monsieur le Abbe St. Armand, and apart from that, felt it would be coquetry should she now pretend that he was other than her heart's delight ; and would on his arrival, receive him as her future husband, and not as she had been previously accustomed to do ; and again, she would not pretend to

be angry or annoyed should he, when alone with her, attempt to claim a more substantial proof of her love. She would allow him to embrace her in a respectful manner, within the bounds of maidenhood and good breeding ; and thinking thus, she went into the garden. It was shady and pleasant there, and she called to Ninette to bring two chairs and come and sit by her.

Ninette obeyed, and came bringing the chairs.

They seated themselves and commenced talking about various things.

Helen thought it a good opportunity to tell Ninette of her having an aunt alive of whose existence she had known nothing previous.

She therefore told her of the letter she had received in the morning from the Chief of Police, of her visit to the Hotel Mirebeau, the interview with her aunt, and her promise to return on the next evening.

Ninette was surprised ; she had always thought Helen alone, having no other relatives living ; but said she was glad that Helen had found some one related to her. She hoped that Helen would take her to see this lady who had come to share her, Ninette's, affection with her darling child, and ended her discourse by pointing to the gate where stood three persons, two gentlemen and a lady.

Helen looked and saw her invited guests, Louis Clarke and his parents. This time she was perfectly calm, only a faint blush, barely perceptible, betraying her interest in the persons at the gate.

She sent Ninette into the house, and went herself to open the little gate that led to the front of the cottage.

Ninette went through the back way, forgetting in her haste to take the chairs with her. Helen led

her guests to the door, Ninette having by this time opened it ; they entered. She led them to the parlor, first introducing Ninette as her friend.

Madame had already seen Ninette on the day when she brought Helen's valise to the house.

Louis shook her heartily by the hand, and she looked at him keenly. He did not flinch from her gaze. She was pleased with him as her looks denoted. Then they all sat down.

Madame sat on one side of Helen and Louis on the other ; Monsieur took a seat quite apart from them. He sat next to Ninette with the evident intention of engaging her in conversation.

Helen was dressed very plainly. She wore a dress of gray material that fitted her exquisite form to perfection. On her left wrist she wore a plain gold bracelet that resembled the links of a chain, and was held together by a heart-shaped locket fastened with a small key, which was attached to the bracelet proper by another very fine chain about three inches long, the whole forming a very beautiful piece of workmanship. This and a beautiful little ring of pearls and rubies that she wore on the little finger of her left hand were her only adornments, and to tell the truth, she needed no others, for a more lovely piece of womanhood could not be found in Paris.

She had given Louis her hand on entering the house, and gazed full into his face with a truthful look that thrilled him.

She began to speak, addressing his mother. She was saying :

“ Madame, I hope you are not fatigued after your journey hither, or Monsieur, either,” looking at Monsieur Clarke. “ It is a good distance. Did you walk or drive ? ”

"We walked the entire distance. Left home early on that account and enjoyed it very much, I assure you," said Madame.

Monsieur said that he never in all his life enjoyed a walk so much as he had the walk from his home to hers.

Helen smiled and replied she was glad that they were pleased. Then turning to Louis said :

"Monsieur, I hope you also enjoyed yourself. If it did not effect Monsieur and Madame, it ought not to have taken the slightest on you."

He replied : "On the contrary, Mademoiselle, I could walk double the distance with the hope of finally arriving at such a beautiful termination."

He said this pointedly, looking at her with a meaning glance. Helen blushed slightly and again spoke :

"I sometimes take a fiacre in the evening on returning home, but always go to my work on foot. It brightens me for the rest of the day."

"I can well believe that, because I know that a sharp walk in the morning is really beneficial to one's health. It is a good habit and should be indulged in as often as practicable," replied Louis.

At this point of the conversation Madame Clarke left Helen's side and sat down by old Ninette, and began to engage her in household matters.

Monsieur Clarke having taken up a book from the table was deeply interested in its contents ; thus leaving Louis and Helen alone. An opportunity that he quickly embraced.

He drew his chair a little closer to Helen's, who immediately lowered her head.

Louis spoke "Mademoiselle Duval," said he, "I hope that you will forgive me for having surprised and disconcerted you on our last meeting. I trust that you have not considered me impertinent or in-

trusive. I am the one on whom your resentment should chiefly fall.

"On arriving at the house that evening, I found mother alone in the parlor. She wished to inform you but I persuaded her not to do so. It is I therefore that was the cause of your alarm.

"And I saw in your confusion, Mademoiselle, a sign that has given me hope ; a sign that revealed to me that Louis Clarke is not altogether an object of indifference to Mademoiselle Duval. May I, dare I hope that you will look favorably on one who loves you so faithfully, so truly ?"

Mademoiselle Duval was getting agitated. She arose and bowing slightly to him said, "Monsieur Louis, would you like to go with me in my garden ?

"Your mother is deeply engaged with Ninette comparing notes. Your father has found a book that takes up all his attention. Let us go into the garden, Monsieur."

She led the way followed by Louis who thought that he had lost a splendid opportunity of declaring his passion for Helen.

On entering the garden Helen took him to see her roses, tulips, geraniums, violets and all the different species of flowers in her beautiful little paradise.

They strolled up and down through the little gravel path that divided the different beds of flowers from each other. Helen explaining to him as well as she could as it was getting dark, being about half-past seven. Thus they strolled back and forth until they found themselves at the back of the house where Helen and Ninette had been sitting in the early part of the evening.

Ninette had in her confusion forgotten to take the chairs in with her ; they stood under a little tree.

Helen saw them and proposed to Louis to sit down and enjoy the beautiful evening twilight.

They sat down and Helen brought up their previous conversation in the house.

She began by referring to the last words spoken by Louis.

“ You wished to know, Monsieur Louis, if you dared to hope for my love in return for yours ? I am not blind to the fact, Monsieur, that you love me, that you have loved me long and truly. I am not a flirt nor a coquet Monsieur, and I tell you what you saw, what you discovered then, is the truth.

“ I am sure of your utmost respect and sitting here alone with you I tell you that your love is returned ; has been many a day.

“ But Hida Duval would never permit herself to commit an act unbecoming a girl who has all her life considered virtue, honor and reputation far dearer than life.”

Louis listened to her with rapture and admiration. Then he ventured to take her hand which she did not resist.

“ Far be it from me Mademoiselle to address one word to you that is ungentlemanly or unfit for your ears. I have no such thoughts, no such intentions.

“ But will you permit me to speak of my love ; to tell you in words what you have long ago known.

“ I would be content and happy beyond expression to be permitted to say in words, ‘ *Hida, I love you.* ’ That is the boon I now crave. The felicity of telling you that you have aroused in my heart a never dying love.”

Helen replied, “ Speak, Monsieur, I am willing to hear.”

In burning passionate words that came from his heart, he told her how long he had loved her, how

he felt when she had been cold to him, how her reserve had almost driven him wild ; the many times he had seen her, his restless, sleepless nights, the anxious fitful hours that had been his for three long years and finally ended his declaration with : "Will you be my wife, Hida ?"

For answer she laid her beautiful head upon his shoulder and he bent down and kissed her willing lips.





CHAPTER XXXI.

HELEN and her betrothed returned to the room. Madame Clarke asked her where she had been.

“Out in the garden,” she replied, “I was showing Monsieur the roses, they are exceptionally fine at present.”

“Yes,” said Louis, “they are indeed beautiful, and Mademoiselle is justly proud of them.”

Monsieur Clarke observed that he could not understand how they found the difference in flowers that time of the evening, as it was quite dark.

Madame said that it would have been better if Louis had brought Mademoiselle in earlier and not kept her out in the dew.

Louis and Helen were looking at each other and smiling all the time.

Ninette entered to inform them that supper was ready.

Monsieur conducted Helen to the table and Louis followed with his mother.

Ninette wanted to retire to one side but Helen told her to take her place at the table.

Helen sat between Louis and his mother. Ninette and Monsieur sat opposite.

This cheery little supper consisted of choice tid-bits selected by Helen.

Helen was very attentive to Madame. To Monsieur also she paid great attention ; and not by any means forgetting Louis.

But that gentleman's time was taken up principally in gazing at Helen.

She at last told him playfully "to keep his eyes before him."

Louis jokingly replied, "that his eyes would wander to the right in spite of all he could do the contrary."

And as that happened to be the very side Helen was sitting on, she understood him, and rewarded his gallantry with a smile.

They enjoyed themselves pleasantly.

Then Ninette arose and went to a Chiffonnier, that stood close by and brought wine, grapes, figs, and comfits.

Helen filled Monsieur and Madame's glass, then Louis', she also filled Ninette's and lastly her own.

Monsieur arose and said, "that he wished to make a few remarks."

He said "that he was proud to stand in the presence of Mademoiselle Duval. A young lady for whom he had the profoundest respect and admiration. He had known her but a short time ; but believed that his son had known her for a period of three or four years, — loving her dearly all the while, and he believed she was about to repay him for his devotion to her in a manner that would greatly please that young gentleman;" made sundry allusions to gardens, flowers, twilight, and conversations, all of which had a very direct meaning, connecting Monsieur Louis and Mademoiselle Duval in a very singular manner. He had no doubt they had arrived at a satisfactory understanding, called Helen his dear daughter, and con-

cluded by wishing them a long life and much happiness.

Louis had managed in some way to get possession of one of Helen's hands, and was looking quite proud and happy.

Helen was calm but with a deep flush upon her beautiful face.

Madame also spoke in a feeling and motherly manner.

She said :

"I am very happy in the knowledge that my dear son has won the prize he has been so long striving for, the lady being virtuous, modest; and respectable.

"I am sure that Louis will be the happiest of men, and would be most ungrateful if he did not do all in his power to make her so likewise." She finished her speech by giving them a mother's blessing, and hoped they would live many long years to enjoy each other's love.

She then turned to Helen, whose eyes were bright with tears of joy, and kissed her lovingly.

Ninette also had something to say. She had known Helen ever since she was a child eight years old, had loved her mother dearly, who was an excellent woman. Her father also was a very good man and loved his family. Helen, their child, deserved all the happiness, love, and respect that was due one so virtuous, tender, and beautiful, she hoped that Monsieur would devote his life to make her happy, and should he fail through willful neglect or want of devotion, he would find it encumbent and extremely salutary to keep out of her—Ninette's—way. She finished the last part of her speech by looking straight in Louis' face, and shaking her fist at him, then concluded

by wishing them every blessing that a long and happy life could afford.

Helen had been listening to Ninette's speech, all smiles and blushes, with one of her arms around Madame's waist, and the other had been captured by Louis, who was fondling it and looking at her.

When Ninette had finished her formidable threat against his person, he stood up, telling Helen to do the same. He placed one arm around her, and spoke in the following manner :

" Mademoiselle Duval had been the lady of his choice for a long time; he loved her truly and faithfully, and would continue to do so as long as he lived. He had almost despaired of winning her, but she had taken compassion on him, seeing him so faithful and constant her gentle heart had reproached her. And instead of being cold and reserved toward him, she had become loving and trusting. He vowed to repay her by a life of unselfish devotion, of untiring love; she should never have cause to complain of his behavior to her. He would at all times respect her wishes, consider her happiness paramount to all other duties; would endeavor to surround her with every comfort, and try to be worthy of her love and respect. Letting her see by his actions, that she had not wrongly placed her affections, or given her heart to one who could not appreciate such a priceless and inestimable gift.

Then with his unoccupied hand he raised her head from his shoulder, where it had lain for the last few moments, and entreated her to ratify his words in the presence of all.

She replied unhesitatingly, by throwing her arms around his neck, and allowing him to kiss from her beautiful eyes the *now* fast descending tears.

Madame was crying softly, Monsieur was blowing his nose in a very suspicious manner.

Old Ninette left the table sobbing audibly. She was happy; she had long wished to see Helen married, and was sure she had selected the right man. After having a good cry she returned to the room and sat down.

Helen showed her content in every word she spoke. Louis also was looking remarkably happy; but his mother,—she was overjoyed and talked enough that night to last her for a week.

She did not seem to tire, for on their arising to depart she was as fresh as ever.

Shaking Ninette's hand and telling her to be extremely careful with her daughter-in-law,—then winking and pointing to Louis,—or her husband will be after you instead of you going after him,—she laughed. Ninette did also, saying. "It would be a pleasure to take care of Helen, because her love was that of a mother for her child."

Louis and Helen had retired a little apart, and were speaking in a low voice. He was saying:

"Yes, Hida, let me take this with me that I may choose one of the right size." He held her left hand in his, and was admiring it with loving eyes, he saw the bracelet on her lovely wrist and that also received due admiration.

"Shall I take the ring with me Hida?"

"Yes," she answered timidly, "take it Louis, but be careful with it, and don't let it out of your sight for a moment."

His parents were waiting for him outside.

Helen gave him a good-night kiss, and told him that he must come and see her *every* evening. This he gladly promised. He went to the door holding her hands.

Monsieur bade her good-night, kissing her on the forehead.

Madame threw her arms around her and kissed her cheeks repeatedly; they then said good-night again to each other.

Louis and his parents returning home, leaving Helen at the little gate watching them as they took their way slowly along the street.

On entering the house her first words to Ninette, — who was waiting for here, were — “this is happiness.” Then, “do you like my husband, Ninette?”

“Yes,” replied she, “I like him, and I am sure he will make you happy, as happy as you deserve to be.

“Now, go to bed darling and dream of him. I am going to shut up the house, and shall soon follow you.”

Helen did so, going to her room and to bed.

She was soon asleep with a smile upon her lips; her last words being “Good-night, dear Louis.”

The next morning Helen took an early breakfast with Ninette, telling her that she should on returning home in the afternoon bring her aunt with her. She was going to Madame St. Claire’s as usual, and later in the day would go to the Hotel Mirebeau and visit her aunt as she had promised. She then left the house and went on her way.

Louis and his parents arrived home in due time. Bertram had been waiting to receive them. He was a very old man, and sincerely attached to Monsieur Clarke, who had known him a long time. His son was a waiter, and had repeatedly implored his father to come and live with him, but he would not; he was satisfied to remain there, being contented and happy.

Madame and Monsieur went directly to their room and to bed, after expressing their mutual satisfaction

in the manner their future daughter-in-law had received them.

Louis remained with Bertram for a long while. He told the good old man about his engagement with Helen, told him that he was very happy in possessing her love, and he would try to make her happy and contented.

Bertram replied that he was very fond of Mademoiselle Duval, having had ample opportunity of knowing her during her stay at his father's, (Louis') house. He said that Louis would be a villain did he not treat her in a proper manner, and ended by wishing them happiness, and giving them an old man's blessing. Louis bade him good-night and went then to his room.

He did not go immediately to bed, however, but sat down and began to think of Helen.

He was proud that she was universally loved ; that all who knew her had blessings for her, and he returned thanks to God.

He promised himself to tell his friend Jules all about it in the morning, and was shortly after dreaming of Helen Duval, his promised wife.





CHAPTER XXXII.

HELEN arrived at Madame St. Claire's earlier than she was wont, her reason for doing this was that she intended to go to the Hotel Mirebeau and spend a good part of the day with her aunt. She would tell Madame St. Claire about her betrothal before leaving the shop that day.

She did her work as usual, making no mistakes and directing the girls as she had always done, with a happy smile upon her face. When it was twelve o'clock Helen arose from her table and told Pauline Des Champs to go and call Madame St. Claire. She soon returned followed by Madame, who thought it very strange that Helen should send in search of, and not come to her as she always had done.

Helen was standing in the center of the room blushing and looking happier than anyone present had ever seen her. Madame knew that something out of common was about to happen. They were not kept waiting long. Helen began to speak. She said, speaking in a low voice and looking first at the girls and then at Madame St. Claire :

“ What I am going to say will in no measure surprise you or any of my other friends here present, but I thought it my duty, as I feel it a pleasure, to inform you of my engagement with Monsieur Louis Clarke. Everybody here has known for a long time that he has been untiring in his love and devotion.

"You are all aware that notwithstanding my reserve and coolness toward him, he has continued to love me ; never swerved in his resolve to make me his wife. He has at last succeeded and I am really and truly his promised wife, but our marriage will not take place for a good while.

"In the mean time, we are all in all to each other ; nothing can ever part us now. I was a long while letting Monsieur know of my love for him, but now he *does* know it, and I am proud to confess it to the world. I have also another matter to acquaint you with.

"You all know that I am an orphan, but none of you knew that I had an aunt living. I did not know it myself until yesterday morning. You remember I received a letter yesterday brought by a *gendarme* ?"

"Yes," they all replied.

"Well, that letter was from Monsieur le Commissaire of Police, and it directed me to go to the Hotel Mirebeau ; and there I found my aunt. I had never seen her before, never dreamed of her existence, but in the short time I remained there, I learned to love her. She wishes to take me home with her.

"I have not yet promised to go, but suppose I shall. My betrothal to Louis will be no hindrance. I therefore ask you, Madame, to allow me to leave here as soon as possible, that I may go and see her at the Hotel."

Madame replied : "You have my best wishes, Helen. I congratulate you. I knew that Louis loved you and that you also loved him, and hope that you will be happy with each other. As to your going early, you can please yourself about that ; go when you like."

The young ladies had been whispering with great

animation among themselves, and when Madame had finished speaking, Pauline Des Champs stepped forward and said that she had been selected without a dissentient voice to congratulate Mademoiselle Duval on her betrothal to Monsieur Louis Clarke. She said the girls wished to convey their heart-felt gratification by wishing her a long life of happiness with the man who had won her heart. They were also glad to hear of her finding a relative whom she could love and respect ; and hoped she would condescend to remain with them until her marriage should take place. Then they would not be so selfish as to expect her to remain with a lot of unmarried girls, but she would always receive their warmest love and esteem.

Helen was deeply moved by this little speech from Pauline. She kissed her. She gave them all a salute, thanking them for their good opinion, then said it was time to go to her aunt, who was expecting her.

She went with Madame to her private room for a moment ; from thence she returned with moist eyes, Madame having there shown a great deal more feeling than she did before the girls.

Helen then put on her bonnet and cloak, said good-bye to the girls, and departed.

Ten days had passed. The Eastwoods had not yet returned to London.

They paid many visits to the Clarke's, and their visits had been returned. Louis would sometimes take Princess to the theatre or to a concert, but never for a moment forgetting his allegiance to his betrothed. She was not fond of going to balls, parties, or the theatre.

He went every evening to see her. She would go with him sometimes to a concert, at other times to the Bois de Bolonge, or promenade on the Champs Elysees and return home.

Helen would then sing to him or he would read to her while she would lie on the sofa watching him with loving trustful eyes ; then take him to supper. She would select sweet bits from the different dishes and place them on his plate. After supper he would remain in the parlor a little while, then they would go into the garden among the flowers. She would give him a rose, or a violet, putting it in the button-hole of his coat. Then would come the time to part for the evening.

It was invariably the same ; walking hand in hand to the gate and on arriving there she would put up her lips and he would kiss them ; never forgetting to kiss her eyes. He would then go away and she return to the house.





CHAPTER XXXIII.

LOUIS had written to Mr. Glenham telling him of his and Jules' betrothal and sending their respects to his wife and daughter. He wrote to say he had won the girl he had been in love with for a long time. That she was a pearl and the darling of his heart.

Mistress Glenham listened to her husband as he read Louis' letter and smiled. She remembered him very well when he had come to visit them at the Hotel Meurice. She had thought him a manly fellow and deserving a good woman's love.

Louis made no allusion to Lord Upham in his letter from motives of delicacy, not knowing whether Mr. Glenham had told his wife or not; arguing rightly that in the event of his *not* having done so, and he should mention the fact, his wife might see it. Then she would be annoyed. It was lucky he did not, for she would undoubtedly have found it out, having her husband's permission to open all his letters.

Mr. Glenham replied by thanking him for remem-
bering their acquaintance; was glad to hear he had
won the lady he loved. Sent his own and his wife's
congratulations to himself and Jules and ended by
inviting them to England and to bring their wives
with them.

Miss Princess Eastwood kept her word. She tried
every art of which she was mistress to make Louis
love her; but to no purpose.

He would be kind to her, obliging in every way but he never swerved in his love for Helen ; never thought of any other woman in that way. His father had long ago given up his idea and was happy in his son's happiness.

His mother was often to be seen at Helen's, where she would meet her aunt. That lady having not yet returned to Lyons. She would spend whole days at Helen's home but always returned to the hotel to sleep.

She had been introduced to Louis and admired him very much ; inviting him to make one of the party on her return to Lyons.

Louis thanked her and said he would be only too glad to go.

Helen had left Madame St. Claire's a few days previous ; her aunt objecting to her remaining.

She said it was not at all necessary for Helen to work any longer for her living. That she would have enough to do at her future home in Lyons. And as she was her only relative, would at her death inherit all her property.

The parting between Madame and Helen was truly affecting. It took place in Madame's private room. Helen's aunt was present.

Madame said, "Helen, my love, we have known each other for a long time ; have become used to each other and I shall miss you terribly. Where shall I find another like you ?

"I love you as if you were my own daughter. I have taken great interest in your affairs and should like to hear from you. Promise me that you will not forget but always remember the old woman that loves you.

"I am very sorry but suppose it must be. I may

never see you again and should like to carry the image of your dear face with me to the grave."

Then she flung herself on Helen's bosom and wept.

Mademoiselle Valandieu said, "They were going to Lyons in two or three days, but before leaving would come and say good-bye.

With this promise Madame was forced to content herself.

Helen then left her alone in the room and went to inform the girls. When she had done so, every girl in the room was crying. They were truly sorry she was going to leave them. Could she not remain until the date of her marriage was fixed?

Why should she hurry to leave Paris where she had so many friends? Did she no longer love them? Had she become disgusted with them?

They cried a good deal and Helen cried also. She really was sorry to leave them.

Mademoiselle Valandieu promised them to return with Helen on the following day.

Helen said, "I shall come again to see you all. We will not leave Paris for two or three days yet;" then smiled and left them.

Helen then went to her friend Cora and told her she was going to leave Paris and go to Lyons with her aunt who had been introduced to her before. Cora expressed great sorrow at the intelligence but Helen promised to return and be her bridesmaid when she was ready to be married. They had an interesting conversation on many things then Helen and her aunt returned to the hotel.

Jules Bertram had promised Sabine's father not to press her for any immediate marriage. But had changed his mind and spoke to her parents again on the subject, urging his loneliness and bringing many arguments to bear on them.

They promised to give their consent providing Sabine also was satisfied.

He spoke to her about it one night in the parlor and she flatly refused ; but he begged and pleaded, and was so kind, tender and loving that she at last gave her consent, and the marriage was to take place in two months.

Her mother said that by her making the time so limited the whole house would be in an uproar ; but went to work with Sabine and her friends to get everything in readiness for the event.

Jules wrote to the convent where his sister was, asking the Mother Superior to permit her to attend as one of the bridesmaids. He had long ago told her about Sabine, sending her a likeness of his sweetheart with her love.

The Mother Superior replied, "That she would permit Mademoiselle Ruby Bertram to attend the wedding of her brother, but she sincerely hoped that the young lady would not become intoxicated with the pleasures and vanities of the world, and on her return to the convent become a source of trouble to her, and her sisters. Nevertheless she shall attend, and if her heart is in the right, neither weddings nor balls nor all the other snares of this wicked world could corrupt her."

One evening about six o'clock Helen and her aunt were walking in the direction of the Hotel Mirebeau. It was the day before that of their departure. They approached the hotel when Helen suddenly saw Louis coming towards them, with a young lady on his arm ; evidently bound for the same place.

Louis saw her also, but too late to avoid the meeting.

Louis and the lady reached the door of the hotel at precisely the same moment that Helen and her

aunt did. The recognition was mutual. Louis started guiltily and awkwardly raised his hat to Helen. But she and her aunt without noticing him further passed on up the stairs and went to No. 55, second floor, opened the door and disappeared.

Louis and his lady friend also came up the stairs, and went along the passage until they came to No. 85.

Louis was terribly agitated, the lady, — who was no other than Miss Princess Eastwood returning from a short walk with him; — had also seen his embarrassment, and wondered.

She asked him who the ladies were that had caused him so much uneasiness. He replied that the elder was Mademoiselle Bertha Valandieu, and the younger Mademoiselle Helen Duval his betrothed wife.

They had entered the room and were sitting on the sofa. Her parents were also there. He had not been gone half an hour from the room taking Princess for a short promenade intending to go direct from her to his dear Helen. He had never seen Helen there, never met her aunt there. He knew she was stopping in that hotel, but did not know the number of the room she occupied.

He would have given anything not to have met Helen then. He did not wish her to become acquainted with Miss Eastwood.

What would Helen say to him, when he should see her in the evening?

He should have to tell her everything, and she would be angry. He did not know what to do.

He remained about half an hour with the Eastwoods, then saying good evening left them and went down stairs.

Before leaving the hotel, Louis asked the clerk

who had witnessed the meeting between the two parties,—“what was the number of the elder lady’s room.”

“Mademoiselle Valandieu you mean Monsieur?”

“Yes,” replied Louis, “You seem to know her well.”

“Oh! very well Monsieur.” The room is No. 55, second floor.

“But if you wish to see her now you wont be able to do so; because herself and the young lady returned in about ten minutes after you met them and calling a fiacre, they drove away.

Louis turned, called a fiacre and drove to Helen’s home, only to find that she had not yet returned.

He dismissed the driver and concluded to wait until she came, and then to tell her everything about Miss Eastwood and himself.

He waited until ten, eleven o’clock, then he began to be alarmed, and telling the now thoroughly frightened Ninette,—that he was going to find her, he put on his hat and rushed from the house.

Helen and her aunt after entering the room stared at each other.

There could be no mistake, they had seen Louis with a lady on his arm. Who was this lady?

Helen did not know. Louis had often told her that he knew no lady to whom he cared to introduce her.

Then who was this woman?

She was determined to find out before an hour had passed.

Her aunt spoke and said, “Helen have you faith in your lover? Do you think that he is true to you?”

She replied, “My dear aunt, I have implicit faith in Louis, but there is something wrong and I am going to know what it is.

Before half an hour I shall know all about it."

Then she said suddenly, "come with me aunt, I am going to see Monsieur le Abbe at once; then I shall return here and question the Hotel Clerk."

The two descended the stairs, passed through the door, hailed a fiacre and were driven away. It was then about seven o'clock. They went in the direction of Pere La Chaise; stopped at Our Lady of Mercy, and went in, telling the driver to wait for them.

Helen told Monsieur le Abbe everything about her meeting Louis one hour previous with a lady on his arm of whom she had no knowledge, and of her determination to find out the rights of the whole matter.

When Mademoiselle Valandieu arrived in Paris, and after finding her niece, she begged Helen to take her to her own place of worship, and Helen had introduced her to Monsieur le Abbe St. Armand

He then remembered his promise to Helen's mother, and rightly concluded this lady was no other than Helen's mother's sister. She had since visited the chapel and had become sincerely attached to the good priest.

She told him they were going to leave Paris before sunrise, leaving Ninette behind to take care of the cottage until her niece could find a purchaser, as she intended to sell it.

Monsieur le Abbe told her to leave that matter with him.

He would place the affair in the hands of a notary and it would soon be arranged.

He told Helen to go home and tell Ninette to pack up all their clothing and get them ready by the following evening and he would see that they were sent to their destination.

Ninette going in the same train.

In the mean time, he said, "you can take the midnight train for Lyons, and avoid seeing any one, if you feel so disposed."

Helen said she would leave a letter with him for Louis, and begged him not to be angry with her lover. She was going to punish him for deceiving her, and that would be sufficient.

He promised her that he would not be angry with him when he came to inquire of her whereabouts.

Helen and her aunt then left the chapel promising to return and say good-bye before they took the train.

They were driven back to the hotel Mirebeau. Mademoiselle Valandieu going upstairs and leaving her niece below.

Helen paid the driver liberally, and he went away rejoicing. Then she beckoned the clerk to one side and questioned him.

"Who was the young lady she had seen about two hours ago ?

"Was she stopping in the hotel ?

"How was it she had been there so many times with Mademoiselle Valandieu and had not seen her before?"

The clerk replied, that the young lady had been stopping there about five or six weeks. Her parents were also in the hotel, they were English folks, their names Eastwood.

They were going to leave Paris for London the following day. They had paid their bills up to that date, their baggage packed, and everything ready.

Then she inquired again.

"Had the gentleman who had escorted Miss Eastwood at the time been often at the hotel ?

"Had he taken her out much previously?"

"Oh, yes, Mademoiselle, almost every evening, sometimes alone and at other times with her parents."

"Was there a private sitting-room in the hotel, where she could sit for half an hour?"

"Yes, there was such a room in the hotel. Would Mademoiselle like to go there?"

"Yes," replied Helen, "but first do me a favor, take this card to the young lady, and say that I wish to see her there, then return and conduct me."

"Very well," Mademoiselle, "but will she come to you?" said the clerk.

"Oh, yes," said Helen, "give it to her privately.

"She occupies a separate room from that of her parents, does she not?"

"Oh, yes," said he, "I shall do as you wish Mademoiselle and return to you."

"Thank you," said Helen.

The clerk knew Miss Eastwood's room very well, and without disturbing her parents, went directly there, and knocked at her door. She opened it and he handed her Helen's card—Helen Duval.—"Does this lady wish to see me personally?" she inquired of him.

"Yes, Miss Eastwood, she awaits you below in the private sitting-room. Will you come to her?"

"Yes, I shall be down in a few moments."

The clerk bowed and returned to Helen, and conducted her to the room set apart for interviews of this nature. She was not kept waiting long, for presently Miss Eastwood knocked at the door. Helen opened it. There standing before her was the young lady she had seen on the arm of her lover in the early part of the evening.

They looked at each other suspiciously, distress-

fully. Miss Eastwood saw before her the young lady of whom she had heard so much. This was Helen Duval, the lady with whom Louis Clarke was in love. The lady who had taken him away from her. This was the woman who had made him slight his father's wishes in regard to herself. There could be no doubt of her beauty, Princess admitted that, but it did not tend to soften her toward Helen.

On the contrary, she was inclined to be angry with her, and resolved to be bitter in her remarks. Helen, on her part, was thinking in what degree this woman stood to her lover — on what footing? Who was she? The clerk told her she was English, but when had Louis become acquainted with her? Where had he first seen her? She would find out these things at once.

Helen spoke first, pointing to a chair. Miss Eastwood sat down.

"I have not the honor of your acquaintance, Mademoiselle, but seeing you this evening in company with the gentleman to whom I am betrothed, and thinking you were probably unaware of that fact, I took the liberty of sending for you that I might ascertain whether he has told you or not."

Princess replied that her name was Princess Eastwood, and she was stopping at the hotel with her parents; that the gentleman whom she had seen with her was to have been her husband, had been engaged to her from his childhood.

She had been brought to Paris against her wishes to be married to him, but on their arrival had learned that he was desperately in love with some one else. This knowledge had given her great satisfaction, her heart being in the keeping of another gentleman who was greatly attached to her. Mr. Clarke had

been visiting her parents through motives of friendship, and not because he was in love with her.

Mademoiselle Duval could rely on her superior beauty to retain his affections in the future, as she had captured them in the past. But herself and parents were to return to London on the following day. She begged Miss Duval would give herself no further uneasiness regarding the intimacy that existed between herself and Mr. Clarke, and ended by expressing the hope that Miss Duval was satisfied with the explanation she had given.

Helen listened to Miss Eastwood's sarcastic reply with a slight flush on her cheeks, and when she concluded, answered her in a perfectly calm voice :

"Mademoiselle Eastwood, I thank you for your explanation, which is perfectly lucid and clear. Permit me also to return thanks for the extremely lady-like manner in which you have given them expression. But being only a Frenchwoman, shall not presume to place myself on a level with the talented Miss Eastwood. Nevertheless, you will merit my life-long gratitude, if you condescend so far as to answer me a few questions."

Miss Eastwood replied that she would be extremely happy to answer any questions that Miss Duval might think proper to ask her.

"I thank you, Miss Eastwood, and shall endeavor to be as brief as possible," replied Helen.

"Miss Eastwood, you have just said that you were brought here to wed Monsieur Louis Clarke. Was he aware of that fact?"

"I do not know. I suppose so," replied Princess.

"How long have you been in Paris, Miss Eastwood?"

"We have been here about six weeks," said Princess.

"And has Monsieur Louis been coming to see you all that time?"

"No," replied Princess, "we were here ten days before he came to see me, although he must have known of my arrival in Paris."

"You say you were engaged ever since you were children. How is that?"

"Our fathers had made up their minds that we were to be married, and refused all other opportunities," replied Miss Eastwood.

"And after you had been in Paris and found out that he loved some one else, why did not you send him away altogether, or persuade your parents to return to London?"

"Miss Duval, I promised to answer you a few questions, *civil* ones, but you are getting impudent. I can't see how our sojourn here can possibly be of any interest to you," replied Miss Eastwood angrily.

"If you had possessed any self-respect, on your discovery that Monsieur Louis had placed his affections elsewhere, you would have forbidden him to visit you, and would not have permitted him to become so intimate, allowing him to escort you to places of amusement, and to lean on his arm so heavily when walking by your side," said Helen.

"Miss Duval does me the honor to be jealous of me," replied Princess, with a smile. "Are you not sufficiently sure of him that you need be so very cautious?"

Helen replied that when Monsieur Louis Clarke's affection for her had become so fragile as to warrant her becoming jealous of a lady who possessed the traits of good breeding exhibited by Miss Eastwood, she should renounce him altogether, and consider his love valueless and unworthy her acceptance.

At this cool reply from Helen, delivered with the utmost *sang-froid*, Miss Eastwood arose from her chair in a passion, and looking steadily at Helen, said :

“ This interview has lasted long enough, Miss Duval. It was not of my seeking. You wished to know if your lover was free to make you his wife. Take my word, Miss Duval ; as far as I am concerned he is at liberty to do so. You will meet with no opposition from me. To-morrow we return to London, and then I shall wed the man of my choice. I sincerely hope you and Mr. Clarke will enjoy a life of everlasting felicity.”

She turned to leave the room, but Helen who had arisen from her seat and was standing in the door with a mocking smile on her face interposed by a motion of her hand and said :

“ Miss Eastwood it is extremely gratifying to know I possess a lover who has been true to me notwithstanding all the arts and wiles brought to bear on him. I shall leave Paris to-night with my aunt, leaving Louis here. If you can postpone your return for a little while you will have abundant opportunity of again trying to seduce my future husband.

“ I have only to add, that when to-morrow’s sun shall have arisen his beams shall not warm the head of Helen Duval in Paris. But I shall feel his penetrating rays in the city of Lyons.”

Helen opened the door, bowed and left the room leaving Princess Eastwood standing there in a terrible passion.

Miss Eastwood after a second left the room and went upstairs.

She said nothing to her parents about the interview.

On the following day the Eastwood’s bade farewell

to the Clarke's. The two old gentlemen were truly sorry to part, but Madame Clarke and Mrs. Eastwood appeared to take their parting as a matter of no import. They embraced and kissed each other as all women do ; hoping to meet again sometime in the future.

Miss Eastwood received as a present from Monsieur Clarke, a splendid pair of diamond ear-rings. He embraced her fervently. She shook Louis' hand, giving her cheek to kiss which he did pleasantly enough. She also gave him a letter to read at his leisure. Asked him to convey her love to his sweetheart and to say that she would see her again some day in Paris.

They kissed and shook hands again. Then the Eastwood's departed in a coupé for the depot, calculating to take the train that would leave in ten minutes for Calais.





CHAPTER XXXIV.

HELEN DUVAL went upstairs to her aunt who had become alarmed at her long absence.

Her rapid flight up the stairs and her war of words with Miss Eastwood had brought a beautiful flush to her cheeks.

Her aunt noticing this said, "Helen, what is the matter? What have you been doing?"

"Nothing, dear aunt; I have only been speaking to Miss Eastwood down stairs." Then she gave Mademoiselle Valandieu a full account of the conversation she had with Princess, and told her aunt to get a few moments' rest before they left the hotel. She herself was going to write a few letters.

Then seating herself at the desk she began to write. Her tranquil brow, sparkling eyes and firmly set mouth indicated great resolution.

The first letter was to Louis :

HOTEL MIREBEAU,
Paris

MY DEAR LOUIS :

When this letter reaches you I shall be far away. It is now half-past nine, and the train for Lyons leaves precisely at twelve. I am going there with my aunt to be out of your way. You will then be able to carry out your father's wishes, and marry Miss Eastwood. I know all, Louis. Miss Eastwood told me. After I saw you with a lady on your arm in front of the hotel, myself and aunt passed on up the stairs to her room,

where we sat, wondering who it was that my betrothed husband had been promenading with. We could not arrive at any definite conclusion, but that made no difference to me. I had seen you with another woman. That was sufficient. You remember we had decided to start for Lyons Saturday evening. But after what I had seen, aunt agreed with me, that it was better to leave at once. I therefore have made all arrangements to go on the midnight train. Louis, you have deceived me. You have not been true to me. I have trusted you implicitly, and you, in return, have kept back from me what was most important to my peace and happiness.

You should have told me immediately how matters stood, when you found out that I loved you, but you did not. You allowed me to remain in ignorance, and to find it out from the very person that it was your place to have warned me against. Did you think I would not have decided aright? Have you judged me so imperfectly?

My love for you would have taught me how to act. I do not say that I would have released you, but I certainly should have been more prudent,—more cautious—acted with less precipitation. Not for the want of confidence in you, but in justice to myself.

I should have made you do willingly, what you have been doing clandestinely; believing that if Miss Eastwood won you away from me, it would have gratified your father and broke —. Never mind what would have become of me. That has nothing to do with the matter at all.

Your mother, who is a Frenchwoman, loved me from the first. Your father had no reason to hate me. He has always been kind and loving to me. Therefore, Louis, you should have been candid. Miss Eastwood told me my pretty face prevented you from carrying out your father's wishes respecting herself. What nonsense! You know that I never permitted you to make love to me, nor gave you the slightest hint of my

love for you, until that fatal evening a month ago. And to be accused of luring you away from her is therefore false. I love you, Louis, with all my heart,—my life. I consider you engaged to me. I do not release you. I will not do that for all the Princess Eastwoods in the world. We love each other dearly, do we not?

Yet I am going to justify my own conscience, and by so doing crucify my heart. I forbid you to follow me sir. I forbid you to speak to me, or address me by letter, or in any way to communicate with me for six months.

This I absolutely insist upon.

Should you disobey me you will find, — that although you possess my heart, you will incur my displeasure also.

To assist you in enduring my dismissal of you for that time.

Remember I shall always be thinking of you, and loving you; although far away. My thoughts will be with you at all times.

Miss Eastwood is going to London, go with her, see if you cannot bring yourself to obey your father.

My friend Cora's wedding will take place in about five weeks' time.

I shall return to Paris in company with my aunt to be present as one of the bridesmaids.

Your friend Jules will also be married about that time.

You need not try to see me during my stay in Paris. You must wait until six months have passed.

And now I bid you farewell my dear Louis, my lover, my husband.

What is six months? It will soon pass.

Then we can renew our love; having proved our hearts, tried our patience and love for each other.

Then we can take each other's hand, and look in each other's eyes, see and feel that we are more closely allied than ever.

Farewell, my love, be true to your own Hida, who although she sends you from her now, hopes to be received again. Farewell.—I leave you my heart, and carry yours with me, do I not sweet Louis? Farewell. Farewell.

H. D.





CHAPTER XXXV.

HELEN enclosed a note in her letter to Louis, for his mother, thanking her for her kind treatment and hoping she would continue to love her.

She herself should never forget Madame or her husband.

Promising to see her again, and begged she would not be angry with her for what she had done.

She then wrote two other letters.—To Madame St. Claire, and Cora Dubois.

In the letter to Cora she said:

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have unexpectedly taken the midnight train to Lyons.

On my arrival I shall write you why I have done this. At present I am too tired. Give my respects to your mother, and remember me to Victor. I shall not fail to be your bridesmaid as we have agreed.

Remember me to all your young friends and tell them they will see me again soon. I embrace you.

HELEN.

To Madame St. Claire :

DEAR MADAME,

I am very sorry that my aunt and myself cannot see you before we leave Paris. But circumstances have occurred that compel us to leave to-night.

You need not be alarmed, however, there is nothing wrong. I shall let you know more in detail on our arrival.

Give my love to the girls.

Tell Pauline Deschamps not to be alarmed about me in the least, that we shall shortly meet again.

Dear Madame, receive my love and respect. And continue to trust your friend.

HELEN DUVAL.

She finished the letters and posted them.

Then returned and awakened her aunt.

Mademoiselle Valandieu had had a good rest and was refreshed.

She packed her valise quickly, put on her bonnet and shawl, and announced to Helen that she was ready.

Helen also was ready. Then they went down.

Mademoiselle Valandieu stopped at the office to pay her bill.

Helen went to the door and signalled a fiacre. It was about a quarter after ten. They took their seats and told the driver to drive rapidly toward *Pere la Chaise*.

They stopped at the chapel to see Monsieur le *Abbe*, and Helen gave him the letter she had for Louis. Then kneeling, requested his benediction. Blessing her, he bade her be of good cheer. Hoped to see Mademoiselle Valandieu again, saw them to the door, bade them good-night and a pleasant trip to Lyons, and hoped to hear from them immediately on their arrival.

They were then driven to Helen's house, arriving about ten minutes after Louis had made his departure to search for Helen.

When Louis left he was in a terrible state of fear. What had become of Helen? Had she returned to

the hotel while he was waiting at her house ? Possibly.

The clerk told him they had taken a fiacre and were driven away. Where had they gone ? He thought of Monsieur le Abbe and concluded to go there first. He called a passing cab and was driven rapidly to the chapel.

Stopping for a few moments he went in and asked if Helen had been there.

Monsieur le Abbe answered that calmly they had just left, but did not know where they went. Louis knew they had not gone to Helen's home, for he had just come from there.

He therefore concluded to go to the hotel. It was about half past eleven. Bidding Monsieur le Abbe good-night, he entered the fiacre, and was driven rapidly to the hotel. He questioned the clerk about them, fearing something had happened. The clerk said the ladies had just left the hotel, Mademoiselle Valandieu paying her bill in full, were then rapidly driven away, and that was all he knew about it. Louis was suffering tortures. Again getting in the fiacre, he told the driver he must make his horse travel as he never traveled before, and he would pay him extra for his trouble.

The cab-man thought him crazy, but did his best — to no purpose.

Helen and her aunt had left ten minutes before to take the midnight train. As it was considerably after twelve o'clock, they were consequently on their way to Mademoiselle Bertha Valandieu's home in Lyons.

Louis uttered a groan and sat down in the nearest chair ; arising quickly, however, went out and paid the driver, giving him extra fare as he had prom-

ised, returned to the house and began questioning Ninette.

She would not tell him anything, but expressed her sorrow for him, and bade him lie down on the sofa and go to sleep.

Then the next day he could go to Monsieur le Abbe and consult him.

He finally laid down but did not go to sleep.

He arose shortly after and went out taking the road toward his home. He walked the whole distance, arriving about half-past one.

He entered without disturbing any one, went to his room determining to see Monsieur le Abbe the first thing in the morning.

The next morning at eight o'clock he went to Monsieur le Abbe, told him of Helen's departure.

Monsieur le Abbe spoke consolingly to him, then gave him Helen's letter.

Louis broke the seal and read to the end, then passed it to the Abbe, his face twitching with pain.

Monsieur read and returned it with a sorrowful countenance.

Placing his hands on Louis' head told him to have patience and do exactly as she had commanded.

Louis left the chapel like one in a dream, and returned to his mother with his letter and the note addressed to her.

She read them both, shed tears of sorrow at his misfortune, then whispered in his ear one word — wait.

Five weeks had passed, and Helen and her aunt were again in Paris.

They did not go to a hotel, but went to Madame St. Claire's.

Helen had returned to be one of Cora's bridesmaids. The wedding was to take place in two days. All the preparations were complete.

They were to be married on the following Thursday by Monsieur le Abbe St. Armand, Helen being the chief bridesmaid, and the other, Fanchette Georges.

Helen had arrived on Monday and had been two days at Madame's. One day more would see her officiating at a wedding.

Thursday morning dawned brightly. Cora's friends were all there. She looked superb in her bridal dress.

Helen had slept with her the previous night and exchanged ideas and confidences.

Promising each other to remain friends for life.

Cora's mother looked very happy.

They drove down to the chapel and were met by Victor St. Mar and his friends. Henri Dubois acting as best man.

Helen and Fanchette stood near Cora.

Then Monsieur le Abbe read the marriage ceremony that made them man and wife.

He gave them his blessing, wishing them every happiness ; advising them to trust themselves to God.

They left the chapel, returning home to a fine reception.

Congratulations were the order of the day. Everyone was happy.

At the sumptuous breakfast that followed they were toasted to their heart's content.

Cora and her husband going the next day to spend their honeymoon in Lyons with Helen.

Jules' wedding took place at Sabine's home in the Rue Bastile. Ruby Bertram was the only bridesmaid. Sabine not caring for too much publicity. Louis acted as best man for his friend.

Sabine looked very beautiful and happy. The

priest arriving at the proper time, Jules Bertram and Sabine de Artice were declared man and wife.

The house was full of joyous guests ; all were happy excepting Louis ; but he did not mar the festivities in anyway, for he laughed, talked, toasted and was apparently the gayest of the gay ; but Jules knew that his heart was sore.

On the morning after Cora's wedding, she and her husband, Madame St. Claire and a number of young lady friends were at the depot to see Helen, her aunt and the St. Mars on their way.

Helen was not as merry as she had been, for the day before she had caught a glimpse of Louis as she was getting in the carriage on the morning of Cora's wedding and had been thinking of him ever since.

He had made no attempt to see her. At the depot he was watching her with despairing eyes.

She saw him just before the train started and beckoned him through the window.

He flew to her. She bent far enough out to give him her beautiful hand. He kissed it rapturously. She blushed and whispered one word—“remember.”

The locomotive started, Helen was borne away ; leaving Louis standing there with tear-dimmed eyes gazing at the train that was rapidly disappearing, carrying away the woman he loved so dearly but who exacted such a terrible proof of his devotion. Louis went immediately to Jules and told him Helen had again left Paris ; but his only reply to his sorrowing friend was the one word — “Wait.”



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